THE SOVLES CONFLICT with it selfe, AND VICTORY over it selfe by *Faith*.

A Treatise of the inward disquietments of distressed spirits, with comfortable remedies to establish them.

Returne unto thy rest O my soule, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

By *R. Sibbs* D. D. Master of *Katherine Hall* in Cambridge, and Preacher of *Grayes-Inne* London.

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XUM

TO

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL

Sir IOHN BANKS Knight, the Kings Majesties Attourney Generall,

Sir EDVVARD MOSELY Knight, His Majesties Attourney of the Duchie,

Sir WILLIAM DENNY Knight, one of the Kings learned Counsell,

Sir DUDLY DIGGES Knight, one of the Masters of the Chauncery,

And the rest of the Worshipfull *Readers* and *Benchers*, with the *Auncients*, *Barresters*, *Students*, and all others belonging to the Honourable Society of *Gayes-Inne*:

R. SIBBS Dedicateth these Sermons Preached amongst them, in testimony of his due Observance, and desire of their spirituall and eternall good.

To the Christian READER.

THere be two sorts of people alwaies in the visible Church; One that Satan keeps under with false peace, whose life is nothing but a diversion to present contentments, and a running away from God and their owne hearts, which they know can speak no good unto them; these speak peace to themselves, but God speaks none. Such have nothing to do with this *Scripture*; the way for these men to enjoy comfort, is to be soundly troubled. True peace arises from knowing the worst first, and then our freedome from it. It is a miserable peace that riseth from ignorance of evill. The Angel *troubled the waters*, and then cured those that stept in. It is Christs manner to trouble our soules first, and then to come with healing in his wings. Iohn 5.

But there is another sort of people, who being drawn out of *Satans* kingdome, & within the Covenant of grace, whom *Satan* labours to unsettle and disquiet: being the *god of the world*, he is vexed to see men in the world, walk *above* the world. Since he cannot hinder their estate, hee will trouble their peace, and damp their spirits, and cut asunder the sinews of all their endevors. These should take themselves to taske as *David* doth here, and la-

bour to maintain their portion, and the glory of a Christian profession. For whatsoever is in God, or comes from God, is for their comfort. *Himselfe* is the God of comfort; his *Spirit* most knowne by that office. Our blessed Saviour was so carefull that his *Disciples* should not be too much dejected, that he forgat his own bitter passion to comfort them, whom yet hee knew would all forsake him: *Let not your hearts be troubled*, saith hee. And his own soule was troubled to death, that we should not be troubled: *whatsoever is written is written for this end*; every article of *faith* hath a speciall influence in comforting a beleeving soul. They are not only food, but cordials; Yea hee put himselfe to his *Oath*, that we might not only have *Consolation*, but strong *Consolation*. The Sacraments seale unto us all the comforts we have by the death of Christ; the exercise of Religion, as *Prayer, Hearing, Reading, &c.* is that *our joy may be full*: the *Communion of Saints* is chiefly ordained to *comfort the feeble minded*, and to *strengthen the weak*. Gods government of his Church tends to this. Why doth he sweetē our pilgrimage, and let us see so many comfortable daies in the world, but that wee should serve him with cheerfull and good hearts? As for crosses, hee doth but cast us down, to raise us up, & empty us that he may fill us, and melt us that we may be *vessels of glory*, loving us aswell in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while. *We are troubled, but not distres-*

ſed; perplexed, but not in deſpaire; perſecuted, but not forſaken. If we conſider from what *fatherly love* afflictions come, how they are not only moderated, but ſweetned and ſanctified in the iſſue to us, how can it but miniſter matter of comfort in the greateſt ſeeming diſcomforts? How then can we let the reines of our affections looſe to ſorow without being injurious to God and his providence? as if we would teach him how to govern his Church? 2 Cor. 4. 8.

What unthankfulneſſe is it to forget our conſolation, and to look only upon matter of grievance? to think ſo much upō two or three croſſes, as to forget a hundred bleſſings? To ſuck poyſon out of that, frō which we ſhould ſuck hony? What folly is it to ſtraiten & darken our own ſpirits? and indiſpoſe our ſelves for doing or taking good? A limb out of joynt can do nothing without deformity & paine; dejection takes off the wheels of the ſoule.

Of all other, Satan hath moſt advantage of diſcontented perſons, as moſt agreeable to his diſpoſition, being the moſt diſcontented creature under heaven; He hammers all his darke plots in their brains. The diſcontentment of the *Iſraelites in the Wilderneſſe*, provoked God to *ſweare*, that *they ſhould never enter into his reſt*. There is *another ſpirit in my ſervant Caleb*, ſaith God; the ſpirit of Gods people is an incouraging ſpirit. Wiſdome teaches them if they feel any grievances to conceal them frō others that are weaker, leſt they be diſheart- Pſa. 95. ult.

Deu.28.65

ned. God threatens it as a *curse* to give a *trembling heart*, and *sorow of mind*; whereas on the contrary, *joy* is as oyle to the soule, it makes duties come off cheerfully and sweetly from our selves, graciously to others, and acceptably to God. A *Prince* cannot endure it in his subjects, nor a Father in his children to be lowring at their presence. Such usually have stollen waters to delight themselves in.

How many are there that upon the disgrace that followes Religion, are frighted from it? But what are discouragements, to the incouragements Religion brings with it? which are such as the very Angels themselves admire at. Religion indeed brings crosses with it, but thē it brings comforts *above* those crosses. What a dishonour is it to Religion to conceive that God will not maintaine and honour his followers? as if his service were not the best service; what a shame is it for an heire of heaven to be cast down for every pety losse and crosse: To be afraid of a man whose breath is in his nostrils, in not standing to a good cause, when we are sure God wil stand by us, assisting and comforting us, whose presence is able to make the greatest torments sweet.

Tua præsentia Domine, Laurentio ipsam craticulam dulcē fecit.

My discourse tends not to take men off frō all griefe and mourning; *Light for the righteous is sown in sorrow.* Our state of absence from the Lord, and living here in a vaile of teares, our daily infirmities, and our sympathy with others, requires it; and where most grace is, there

there is most sensiblenes, as in Christ But we must distinguish between griefe, and that sullenneſſe and dejection of spirit, which is with a repining and taking off from duty; when *Ioshua* was overmuch cast down at Israels turning their backs before their enemies, God reproves him, *Get thee up Ioshua, why lieſt thou upon thy face?* Iudg. 7. 10.

Some would have men after the committing of groſſe sins to be presently comfortable, and *beleeve* without humbling themselves at all; indeed when we are once in Christ, we ought not to question our state in him; and if we do, it comes not from the Spirit: But yet a guilty conscience will be clamorous and full of objections, & God will not speak peace unto it till it be humbled. God will let his best children know what it is to be too bold with sin, as we see in *David* and *Peter*, who felt no peace till they had renued their repentance: The way to rejoyce *with joy unspeakable and glorious*, is to stir up sighs *that cannot be uttered*. And it is so farre, that the knowledge of our state in grace should not humble us, that very ingenuity considering Gods love to us, out of the nature of the thing it selfe works sorrow and shame in us, to offend his Majesty.

One main stop that hinders Christians from rejoycing, is, that they give themselves too much liberty to question their grounds of comfort and interest in the promises. This is wonderful comfortable say they, but what is it to me? the

miſe belongs not to *me*. This ariſeth frō want
2 Pet. 10. of giving all *diligence to make their calling ſure* to themſelves. In watchfulneſſe and diligence we ſooner meet with comfort then in idle cōplaining. Our care therefore ſhould be to get ſound *evidence* of a good eſtate; & then likewiſe to keep our *evidence cleare*; wherein we are not to hearken to our own fears & doubts, or the ſuggeſtion of our enemy, who ſtudies to falſifie our *evidence*: but to the *Word*, & our own conſciences inlightned by the ſpirit: and then it is pride and pettiſhneſſe to ſtand out againſt comfort to theſelves. Chriſtians ſhould ſtudy to corroborate their title; We are never more in heaven, before we come thither, then when we can reade our evidences: It makes us converſe much with God, it ſweetens all conditions, & makes us willing to do & ſuffer any thing. It makes us have comfortable & honorable thoughts of our ſelves, as too good for the ſervice of any baſe luſt, and brings confidence in God both in life and death.

But what if our condition be ſo dark, that we cannot reade our evidence at all?

Here look up to Gods infinite mercy in Chriſt, as we did at the firſt when we found no goodneſſe in our ſelves, & that is the way to recover what ever we think we have loſt. By honoring Gods mercy in Chriſt, we come to have the Spirit of Chriſt; therefore when the waters of ſanctification are troubled and muddy, let us run to the witnes of *blood*. God

ſeems

seems to walk somtimes contrary to himself; he seems to discourage, when secretly he doth incourage, as the *woman of Canaan*; but faith can find out these waies of God, & untie these knots, by looking to the free promise & mercifull nature of God. Let our sottish and rebellious flesh murmure as much as it will, *who art thou? and what is thy worth?* Yet a Christian *knows whom he beleeves. Faith* hath learned to set God against all.

Again, we must go on to *adde grace to grace*. A growing & fruitfull Christian, is alwaies a comfortable Christian; the oyle of *grace* brings forth the oyl of *gladnesse*. Christ is first a King of *righteousnes*, & thē a King of *peace*; the righteousnes that he works by his Spirit brings a peace of *sanctification*, whereby though we are not freed from sin, yet we are enabled to combat with it, & to get the victory over it. Some degree of comfort follows every good actiō, as heat accompanies fire, and as beams and influences issue from the *Sun*; which is so true, that very *Heathens* upō the discharge of a good conscience, have found cōfort & peace answerable; this is a reward before our reward. Heb. 7. 2. *Præmium ante præmiū*

Another thing that hinders the comfort of Christians is, that they forget what a gracious & merciful covenant they live under, wherein, the perfectiō that is required is to be found in Christ. Perfection in us is sincerity: What is the end of *faith* but to bring us to Christ? Now imperfect faith, if sincere, knits to Christ, in whom our perfection lies. Gods

Gods design in the covenant of grace is to exalt the riches of his mercy, above all sin and unworthines of man; and we yeeld him more glory of his mercy by beleeving, thē it would be to his justice to destroy us. If we were perfect in our selves, we should not honour him so much, as when wee labour to be found in Christ, having his righteousnesse upon us.

There is no one portiō of Scripture oftner used to fetch up drooping spirits than this, *Why art thou cast down ô my soul?* it is figurative, & full of Rhetorique, and all little enough to perswade the perplexed soule quietly to *trust in God*; which without this retiring into our selves and checking our hearts, will never be brought to passe. *Chrysostome* brings in a man loaden with troubles, cōming into the *Church*, where whē he heard this passage read, he presently recovered himself, & becomes another man. As *David* therfore did acquaint himself with this form of dealing with his soul, so let us, demanding a reason of our selves *Why wee are cast down*; which will at least check & put a stop to the distresse, and make us fit to consider more solid grounds of true comfort.

Homil. in Gen.

Of necessity the soul must be somthing calmed & staid before it can be cōforted. Whilst the humors of the body rage in a great distēper, there is no giving of physick: So when the soul gives way to passion, it is unfit to entertain any counsel, therefore it must be stilled by degrees, that it may hear reason; and somtimes

it

it is fitter to be moved with ordinary reaſon, (as being more familiar unto it) then with higher reaſons fetcht from our ſupernatural condition in Chriſt, as from the condition of mans nature ſubject to changes, from the uncomelineſſe of yeelding to paſſion for that, which it is not in our power to mend, &c. theſe & ſuch like reaſons have ſome uſe to ſtay the fit for a while, but they leave the coare untouched, which is *ſinne*, the trouble of all troubles. Yet whē ſuch conſiderations are made ſpiritual by *faith* on higher grounds, they have ſome operation upō the ſoul, as the influence of the *Moon* having the ſtronger influence of the *Sun* mingled with it, becoms more effectual upō theſe inferiour bodies. A candle light being ready at hand, is ſometimes as uſefull as the Sun it ſelf.

But our main care ſhould be to have *Evangelicall* grounds of cōfort, neer to us, as *Reconciliation with God*, whereby all things elſe are reconciled to us, *Adoption & Communion with Chriſt, &c.* which is never ſweeter than under the Croſſe. *Philip Lanſgrave* of *Heſſe*, being a long time priſoner under *Charles the fift*, was demanded what upheld him all that time, who anſwered that *he felt the divine comforts of the Martyrs:* there be *divine comforts* which are felt under the *Croſſe*, and not at other times.

Reſpondit, divinas conſolationes Martyrum ſe ſenſiſſe.

Beſides perſonall troubles, there are many much dejected with the preſent ſtate of the Church, ſeeing the blood of ſo many Saints to be ſhed, & the enemies oft to prevail, but God hath

hath ſtratagems, as *Ioſhua*, at *Ay*; hee ſeems ſomtimes to retire that he may come upon his enemies with the greater advantage; the end of all theſe troubles will no doubt be the ruine of the Antichriſtian faction; and wee ſhall ſee the Church in her more perfect beauty; when the enemies ſhal be in that place which is fitteſt for thē, the *loweſt*, that is, the *footſtoole of Chriſt*; the Church as it is higheſt in the favour of God, ſo it ſhal be higheſt in it ſelf. *The mountain of the Lord ſhall be exalted above all mountains*. In the worſt condition, the Church hath two faces, one towards heaven & Chriſt, which is alwaies conſtant and glorious: another toward the world, which is in appearāce contemptible and changeable. But God will in the end give her beauty for aſhes, and glory double to her ſhame: and ſhe ſhall in the end prevaile: in the meane time, the power of the enemies is in Gods hand: The Church of God conquers when it is conquered: even as our Head Chriſt did, who overcame by patience as well as by power. Chriſts victory was upon the Croſſe. The Spirit of a Chriſtian conquers, when his perſon is conquered.

Robur hoſtium apud Deum.

The way is, in ſtead of diſcouragement, to ſearch all the promiſes made to the Church in theſe latter times, and to turn them into prayers, & preſſe God earneſtly for the performāce of them. Then wee ſhall ſoon finde God both *curſing* his enemies, and *bleſſing* his people out of *Zion*, by the faithfull prayers that aſcend up from thence.

In

In all the *promiſes* we ſhould have ſpeciall recourſe to God in them. In all ſtorms there is Sea-room enough in the infinite goodneſſe of God, for faith to be carryed with full ſaile.

And it muſt be remembred that in all places where God is mentioned, we are to underſtand God in the promiſed *Meſſiah*, typified out ſo many wayes unto us. And to put the more vigor into ſuch places in the reading of them, we in this latter age of the Church muſt think of God ſhining upon *us* in the face of Chriſt, and *our* Father in him. If they had ſo much confidence in ſo little light, it is a ſhame for us not to be confident in good things whē ſo ſtrong a light ſhines round about us: when we profeſſe we beleeve *a crowne of righteouſnes is laid up for all thoſe that love his appearing*. Preſenting theſe things to the ſoul by *faith*, ſetteth the ſoul in ſuch a pitch of reſolution, that no diſcouragements are able to ſeize upon it. *We faint not* ſaith S. *Paul*: wherefore doth hee not faint? becauſe *theſe light & ſhort afflictions procure an exceeding weight of glory*.

Luther when hee ſaw *Melanchon* a godly and learned man too much dejected for the ſtate of the Church in thoſe times, falls a chiding of him, as *David* doth here his own ſoul, *I ſtrongly hate thoſe miſerable cares*, ſaith hee, *whereby thou writeſt thou art even ſpent. It is not the greatneſſe of the cauſe, but the greatneſſe of our incredulity. If the cauſe be falſe, let us revoke it. If true, why doe we make God in his rich*

Ego miſeriarum mas curas, quibus te conſumi ſcribis, vehementer odi. Quod ſic regnat in corde tuo, non eſt magnitudo cauſæ, ſed magnitudo incredulitatis noſtræ. Si cauſa falſa eſt, revocemus. Si vera, cur facimus illum tantis promiſſis mendacem? Luctare contra teipſum maximum hoſtem.

rich promises a liar? Strive against thy self, the greatest enemie; why doe we feare the conquered world, that have the Conquerer himself on our side.

Now to speak something concerning the publishing of this Treatise. I began to preach on the Text about twelve years since in the *City*, & afterwards finished the same at *Grayes-Inne*. After which, some having gotten imperfect notes, endevored to publish them without my privity. Therfore to do my self right, I thought fit to reduce them to this form. There is a pious & studious Gentleman of Grays-Inn, that hath of late published observations upon the whole *Psalme*; and another upon this very *verse* very well; and many others by Treatises of *faith* and such like, have furthered the spirituall peace of Christians much. It were to be wished that we would all joyne to doe that which the Apostle gloried in, *to be helpers of the joy of Gods people*. By reason of my absence, while the work was in printing, some sentences were mistaken. Some will be ready to deprave the labours of other men; but, so good may be done, let such ill disposed persons be what they are, and what they will be unlesse God turn their hearts: and so I commend thee and this poore Treatise to Gods blessing.

2 Cor. 1. ult.

GRAYES INNE,
July 1. 1635.

R. SIBBES.

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IN OPVS POSTHVMVM ADMODUM REVERENDI,

mihíque multis Nominibus colendi,

RICHARDI SIBBS S.T. Professoris, Aulæ Stæ Cath. Præfecti dignissmi.

VAde Liber, *pie* Dux *Animæ*, *pie Mentis* Achates;
Te *relegens Fructu ne pereunte legat.*
Quàm fœlix prodis! Præ sacro Codice *sordent*,
Bartole, *sive tui*; *sive*, Galene, *tui.*

Fidus Præco DEI, *cœlestis* Cultor *Agelli*
Assidui Pretium grande Laboris habet:
Quo Mihi nec Vitâ *melior*, *nec promptior* Ore,
Gratior aut Vultu, *nec fuit* Arte *prior.*

Nil opus ut Nardum Caro *combibat unctа Sabæum*,
Altáve marmoreus Sydera tangat Apex:
Non eget HIC Urnâ, *non* Marmore, *nempe* Volumen
Stat sacrum, *vivax* Marmor, *&* Urna, PIO.

Qui CHRISTO *vivens incessit Tramite Cœli*,
Ætherеumq; obiit Munus, *obire nequit*:
Ducit Hic Angelicis æqualia sæcula Lustris,
Qui VERBO *Studium contulit omne suum.*

Perlegat

Perlegat Hunc Legum Cultrix Veneranda Senectus,
Et quos plena DEO *Mens super Astra vehit:*
Venduntur (quanti!) *circum Palatia* Fumi!
Hic sacer ALTARIS CARBO minoris *erit?*

Heu! Pietas *ubi prisca? profana ô Tempora! Mundi*
Fax! Vesper! prope nox! ô Mora! CHRISTE *veni.*
Si valuere Preces *unquam,* & Custodia CHRISTI,
Nunc opus est Precibus, *nunc* Ope, CHRISTE, *tuâ.*

Certat in humanis Vitiorum Infamia *rebus,*
Hei mihi! nulla novis sufficit Herba *Malis?*
Probra *referre pudet; nec enim decet: Exprobret illa*
Qui volet; Est nostrum flere, silendo queri.

Flere? Tonabo tuas, Pietas neglecta, *Querelas:*
Quid non Schisma, Tepor, Fastus, & Altus *agunt?*
Addo-Sed Historicus TACITUS *fuit optimus. Immo*
Addam — Sphærarum at Musica muta *placet*

EDVº: BENLOSIO.

Cressingæ Templariorum
Prid. Cal. Febr.
MDC XXXV.

On the Work of my learned Friend DOCTOR SIBBS.

FOole that I was! to think my easie Pen
Had strength enough to glorifie the fame
Of this knowne Author, this rare Man of men:
Or give the least advantage to his name. (bright,
Who think, by praise, to make his name more
Show the Suns Glory, by dull Candle-light.

Blest Saint! thy hallow'd Pages doe require
No slight preferment from our slender Layes:
We stand amaz'd, at what we most admire;
Ah, what are Saints the better for our praise!
He that commends this Volume, does no more
Then warme the fire, or gild the massie Ore.

Let me stand silent then. O, may that Spirit,
Which ledd thy hand, direct mine eye, my brest;
That I may reade, and doe; and so inherit
(What thou enjoy'st, and taught) eternall Rest!
Foole that I was! to think my Lines could give
Life to that work, by which they hope to live.

FRA: QUA:

THE SOVLES CONFLICT WITH IT SELFE.

PSAL. XLII.

Why art thou cast downe O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

THE *Psalms* are, (as it were) the Anatomy of a holy man, which lay the inside of a truely devout man outward to the view of others. If the Scriptures be compared to a body, the *Psalmes* may well be the

heart, they are ſo ful of ſweet affections, and paſſions. For in other portions of Scripture God ſpeaks to us; but in the *Pſalmes* holy men ſpeak to God & their own hearts: as

In this *Pſalme*, we have *the paſſionate paſſages of a broken and a troubled ſpirit.*

At this time *David* was a baniſhed man, baniſhed from his owne houſe, from his friends, and which troubled him moſt, from the houſe of God, upon occaſion of *Sauls* perſecution, who hunted him as a Partridge upon the mountaines. See how this works upon him.

1. I. *He layes open his deſire ſpringing from his love.* Love being the prime and leading affection of the ſoule from whence griefe ſprings, from being croſſed in that we love. For the ſetting out of which his affection to the full, hee borroweth an expreſſiō from the Hart, no Hart being chaſed by the hunters,

Verſe 1. *panteth more after the waters*, then my heart doth *after thee O God:* though he found God preſent with him in exile, yet there is a ſweeter preſence of him in his ordinances which now hee wanted

ted and tooke to heart: places and conditions are happy or miserable, as God vouchsafeth his gratious presence more or lesse; and therefore, *When, O when shall it be, that I appeare before God?*

2. Then after his strong desire, *hee laies out his griefe*, which hee could not containe, but must needs give a vent to it in teares: and he had such a spring of griefe in him, as fedde his *teares day and night*; all the ease he found was to dissolve this cloud of grief into the showre of teares. 2. Verse 2.

But, *why gives he this way to his griefe?* *Quest.*

Because together with his exiling from Gods house, he was upbrayded by his enemies, with his religion: *where is now thy God?* Grievances come not alone, but (as *Iobs* messengers) follow one another. *Answ.* Verse 3. These bitter taunts, together with the remembrance of his former happinesse in communion with God in his house, made deep impressions in his soule, when hee *remembred how hee went with the multitude into the house of God*, and led a goodly traine with him, being willing as a good Magistrate, and Verse 4.

Master of a familie, not to goe to the house of God alone, nor to heavē alone, but to carry as many as hee could with him; Oh! the remembrance of this made him powre forth (not his words or his teares onely, but) his very soule. *Former favours and happinesse makes the soule more sensible of all impressions to the contrarie*; hereupon finding his soule over sensible, he expostulates with himselfe, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within mee? &c.*

But though the remembrance of the former sweetnes of Gods presence did somewhat stay him, yet his grief would not so be stilled, and therefore it gathers upon him againe; *one griefe called upon another*, as one deep wave follows another without intermission, untill his soule was almost over-whelmed under these waters; yet he recovers himselfe a little with looking up to God, who he expected would with speed and authoritie send forth *his loving kindnesse* with command to raise him up and comfort him, and give him matter of *songs in the*

Verse 7.

the night. For all this, his unrulie griefe will not be calmed, but renues assaults upon the returne of the reproach of his enemies. Their words were *as swords* unto him, and his heart being made very tender and sensible of griefe, these sharp words enter too deep; and thereupon he hath recourse to his former remedy (as being the most tryed) to chide his soule, and charge it to trust in God. Cap. 1. Verse 8. Verse 10.

CAP. I.

Generall Observations upon the Text.

HEnce in generall wee may observe; that, *Griefe gathered to a head will not be quieted at the first*. We see here passions intermingled with comforts, and comforts with passions, and what bustling there is, before *David* can get the victory over his owne heart: You have some short spirited Christians, that if they be not comforted at the first, they thinke all labour with their hearts is in vaine, and thereupon give way to their griefe. But we see in *David*, *Obser.* 1.

Cap. 1. *vid*, as diſtemper ariſeth upon diſtemper, ſo he gives check upon check, and charge upon charge to his ſoule, untill at length hee brought it to a quiet temper. In Phyſick if one purge will not carry away the vicious humour, then we adde a ſecond; if that will not doe it, we take a third. So ſhould wee deale with our ſoules, perhaps, one check, one charge will not doe it, then fall upon the ſoule againe; ſend it to God againe, and never give over untill our ſoules be poſſeſſed of our ſoules againe.

Obſer.2. Againe, In generall obſerve in *Davids* ſpirit, that *a gracious and living ſoul is moſt ſenſible of the want of ſpirituall meanes.*

Reaſon. The reaſon is, becauſe ſpirituall life hath anſwerable taſte, and hunger and thirſt after ſpirituall helps.

Acrius urgent quæ neceſſitatis ſunt, quam quæ ſpectant ad voluptatem. We ſee in nature, that thoſe things preſſe hardeſt upon it, that touch upon the neceſſities of nature, rather than thoſe that touch upon delights; for theſe further onely our comfortable being; but neceſſities uphold our being it ſelfe:

selfe: we see how famine wrought upon the Patriarks to go into Ægypt: Where we may see what to judge of those who willingly excommunicate themselves from the assemblies of Gods people, where the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are present, where the prayers of holy men meet together in one, and as it were binde God and pull downe Gods blessing. No private devotion hath that report of acceptance from heaven. Cap. 1.

A third generall point is, that *a godly soule by reason of the life of grace, knowes when it is well with it, and when it is ill, when it is a good day with it, and when a bad*; when God shines in the use of meanes, then the soule is as it were in heaven, when God withdraws himself, then it is in darkenesse for a time. Where there is but onely a principle of nature without sanctifying grace, there men go plodding on and keep their rounds, and are at the end where they were at the beginning; not troubled with changes, because there is nothing within to be troubled; and therefore, dead means, quick meanes, or no meanes, all is one with *Obser.* 3.

Cap. 1. with them, an argument of a dead soule. And so we come more particularly and directly to the words. *Why art thou cast down O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within me? &c.*

Parts. The words imply, 1 *Davids* state wherein he was, and 2 expresse his carriage in that state.

1. His state was such that in regard of outward condition, he was in variety of troubles; and that in regard of inward disposition of spirit, hee was first *cast down*, and then *disquieted*.

2. Now for his cariage of himselfe in this condition, and disposition, he dealeth roundly with himselfe: *David* reasoneth the case with *David*, and first checketh himselfe for being too much *cast downe*, and then for being too much *disquieted*.

And then layeth a charge upon himself *to trust in God*; wherein we have the duty he chargeth upon himselfe, which is to *trust in God*, and the grounds of the duty;

1. First, from confidence of better times to come, which would yeeld him matter of *praising God*. And

And then by a repreſentation of God unto him, as a ſaving God in al troubles, nay as ſalvation it ſelfe, an open glorious Saviour in the view of all, *The ſalvation of my countenance*, and all this enforced from *Davids* intereſt in God, *He is my God.* Cap. 1. 2.

Whence obſerve, firſt, from the ſtate he was now in, that *ſince guilt and corruption hath been derived by the fall, into the nature of man, it hath been ſubjected to miſery and ſorow, and that in all conditions: from the King that ſitteth on the Throne to him that grindeth on the mill.* None ever hath been ſo good or ſo great as could raiſe themſelves ſo high as to be above the reach of troubles. *Obſer.* 1.

And that choice part of mankind, the firſt fruits and excellency of the reſt, (which we call the Church) more then others, which appeares by conſideration, both of the *Head*, the *Body* and *members* of the Church. For the *Head* Chriſt, he tooke our fleſh as it was ſubject to miſerie after the fall, and was (in regard of that which hee endured) both in life and death, a man of ſorrowes. 1. Chriſt the Head was a man of many ſorrowes.

For

Cap. 1.

2. The *Church* hath beene and is full of sorows.

For the *Body* the Church, It may say from the first to the last as it is *Psal.*129. *From my youth up they have afflicted mee.* The Church beganne in blood, hath growen up by blood, and shall end in blood, as it was redeemed by blood.

3. The members of the Church have beene and are ful of crosses.

For the members, they are all predestinate to a conformity to Christ their Head, as in grace and glory, so in abasement, *Rom.*8.29. neither is it a wonder, for those that are born soldiers to meet with conflicts, for travailers to meet with hard usage, for sea-men to meet with storms, for strangers in a strange country (especially amongst their enemies) to meet with strange entertainment.

A Christian is a man of another world, and here from home, which hee would forget (if hee were not exercised here) and would take his passage for his country. But though all Christians agree and meet in this, that *through many afflictions we must enter into heaven:* Yet, according to the diversity of place, parts and grace, there is a different cup measured to every one.

Act.14.22.

And

Cap. 1. *Vse.*

And therefore it is but a plea of the flesh, to except against the Crosse, *Never was poore creature distressed as I am:* this is but selfe-love, for was it not the case both of Head, Body and members, as wee see here in *David* a principall member? When hee was brought to this case, thus to reason the matter with himselfe, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? and why art thou disquieted within me?*

Obser. 2.

From the frame of *Davids* spirit under these troubles, wee may observe, that, as the case is thus with all Gods people, to be exercised with troubles, so, *They are sensible of them oftentimes, even to casting downe and discouraging.*

Reas. 1.

And the reason is, they are flesh and blood subject to the same passions, and made of the same mould, subject to the same impressions from without as other men;

2.

And their nature is upheld with the same supports and refreshings as others, the withdrawing and want of which affecteth them. And besides those troubles they suffer in Common with other men, by reason of their new advancement

Cap. 2. 3.

advancement, and their new disposition they have in and from Christ their Head, they are more sensible in a peculiar manner of those troubles that any way touch upon that blessed condition, from a new life they have in and from Christ, which will better appeare if we come more particularly to a discovery of the more speciall causes of this distemper: some of which are, 1 *Without us*. 2 *Some within us*.

Cap. II.

Of discouragements from without.

Outward causes of discouragement.

1. God himselfe.

1. GOD *himselfe:* who sometimes withdrawes the beames of his countenance from his children, whereupon the soule even of the strongest Christian is disquieted; when together with the crosse, God himselfe seemes to be an enemie unto them. The child of God when hee seeth that his troubles are mixed with Gods displeasure, and perhaps his conscience tells him that God hath a just quarrell against him.

him, becauſe hee hath not renewed his peace with his God, then this anger of God puts a ſting into all other troubles, and addes to the diſquiet. There were ſome ingredients of this divine temptation (as we cal it) in holy *David* at this time: though moſt properly a divine temptation be, when God appeares unto us as an enemy, without any ſpeciall guilt of any particular ſinne, as in *Iobs* caſe. Cap. 2. A divine temptation, what.

And no marvaile if Chriſtians bee from hence diſquieted, when as the Sonne of God himſelfe having alwaies before enjoyed the ſweet communion with his Father, and now feeling an eſtrangement, that he might be a curſe for us, complained in all his torments of nothing elſe, but *My God, My God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* It is with the godly in this caſe, as with vapours drawne up by the Sunne, which (when the extracting force of the Sunne leaves them) fall downe againe to the earth from whence they are drawn. So when the ſoule, raiſed up and upheld by the beames of his countenance, is left of Mat. 27. 46

Cap. 2.

God, it presently begins to sinke. Wee see when the body of the sun is partly hid from us (for totally it cannot in an Eclipse by the body of the Moone) that there is a drouping in the whole frame of nature: so it is in the soul, when there is any thing that comes between Gods gracious countenance and it.

2. In regard of Satan, who is all for casting downe.

Besides, if wee looke downe to inferiour causes, the soule is oft cast downe by Satan, who is all for casting downe, and for disquieting. For being a cursed spirit, cast and tumbled downe himselfe from heaven, where hee is never to come again, he is hereupon full of disquiet, carrying a hell about himselfe, whereupon all that he labours for, is to cast downe and disquiet others, that they may be (as much as he can procure) in the same cursed condition with himselfe. Hee was not ashamed to set upon Christ himselfe with this temptation of casting downe, and thinks Christs members never low enough, till he can bring them as low as himselfe.

The devill envies our happinesse first, and last.

By his envy and subtlety wee were driven out of Paradice at the first, and now

now hee envies us the Paradice of a good conſcience: for that is our Paradice untill wee come to heaven; into which no ſerpent ſhall ever creepe to tempt us. When Satan ſeeth a man ſtrongly and comfortably walke with God, he cannot endure that a creature of meaner ranke by creation than himſelfe, ſhould enjoy ſuch happineſſe. Herein, like (ſome peeviſh men which are his inſtruments) men too contentious, and bred up therein (as a Salamander in the fire,) who when they know the cauſe to be naught, and their adverſaries to have the better title; yet (out of malice) they will follow them with ſuits and vexations, though they be not able to diſable their oppoſites title; If their malice have not a vent in hurting ſome way, they will burſt for anger. Cap. 2.

It is juſt ſo with the devill when hee ſeeth men will to heaven, and that they have good title to it, then hee followes them with all dejecting and uncomfortable tentations that he can: it is his continuall trade and courſe to ſeek his reſt in our diſquiet, he is by beaten pra-

Cap. 2.

ctice and profession, a tempter in this kinde.

3. Satans instruments, who are all for casting downe.

Againe, what Satan cannot doe himselfe by immediate suggestions, that he labours to work by his instruments, who are all for casting downe of those who stand in their light, as those in the Psalme, who cry, *Downe with him, downe with him, even to the ground*; a character and stamp of which mens dispositions, wee have in the verse before this text, *Mine enemies* (saith *David*) *reproach me.* As sweet and as compassionate a man as hee was, to *pray* and *put on sackcloath* for them, yet he had enemies, and such *enemies*, as did not suffer their malice only to boile and concoct in their own breasts, but out of the abundance of their hearts, they reproached him in words. There is nothing the nature of man is more impatient of, then of reproaches; for there is no man so meane, but thinkes himselfe worthy of some regard, and a reproachfull scorne shews an utter disrespect, which issues from the very superfluity of malice.

Psa. 35. 13.

Neither went they behind his back, but

but were ſo impudent to ſay *it to his face:* a malicious heart and a ſlandering tongue goe together, and though ſhame might have ſuppreſſed the uttering of ſuch words, yet their inſolent cariage ſpake as much *in Davids heart:* Wee may ſee by the language of mens cariage what their heart ſaith, and what their tongue would vent, if they dared. Cap. 2. Pſal. 39. 1.

And this their malice *was unwearied*, for they ſaid *daily* unto him, as if it had beene fed with a continuall ſpring: malice is an unſatiable monſter, it will miniſter words, as rage miniſters weapons. But what was that they ſaid ſo reproachfully? and ſaid daily? *Where is now thy God?* they upbraid him with his ſingularity, they ſay not now, *where is God?* but, *where is thy God*, that thou doſt boaſt ſo much on? as if thou hadſt ſome ſpeciall intereſt in Him. Where we ſee that the ſcope of the devill and wicked men is to ſhake the godlies Faith and confidence in their God: As Satan laboured to divide betwixt Chriſt and his Father; *If thou* Verſe 3.

Cap. 2. Mat. 4.

beest the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread; So hee labours to divide betwixt Father, and Son, and us: they labour to bring God in jealousie with *David*, as if God had neglected him, bearing himselfe so much upon God. They had some colour of this, for God at this time had vailed himselfe from *David*, as hee does oft from his best children for the better discovery of the malice of wicked men: And doth not Satan tippe the tongues of the enemies of Religion now, to insult over the Church now lying a bleeding? *What becomes of their Reformation, of their Gospell?* Nay, rather whats become of your eyes, wee may say unto them? For God is neareſt to his children whē he seems fartheſt off. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seene.* God is with them, and in them, though the wicked be not aware of it; it is all one, as if one should say betwixt the space of the new and old Moone, where is now the Moone? when as it is never nearer the Sun than at that time.

This was preached in the beginning of the troubles of the Church.

Gen. 22. 14

Quest. *Where is now thy God?*

In

In heaven, in earth, in mee, every where but in the heart of such as aske such questions, and yet there they shall finde him too in his time, filling their consciences with his wrath; and then, Where is their God? where are their great friends, their riches, their honors, which they set up as a god? what can they availe them now? Cap. 2. *Answ.*

But how was *David* affected with these reproaches? their words were as swords, *as with a sword in my bones, &c.* they spake daggers to him, they cut him to the quick when they toucht him in his God, as if he had neglected his servants, when as the devill himself regards those who serve his turn; touch a true godly man in his Religion, and you touch his life and his best freehold, hee lives more in his God than in himselfe; so that we may see here, there is a murther of the tongue, a wounding tongue as well as a healing tongue: men think themselves freed from murther, if they kill none, or if they shed no blood, whereas they cut others to the heart with bitter words. It is good Verse 10. A murther of the tongue.

Cap. 2.

to extend the Commandement to awake the conſcience the more, and breed humility, when men ſee there is a murdering of the tongue. Wee ſee *David* therefore upon this reproach to be preſently ſo moved, as to fall out with himſelfe for it. *Why art thou ſo caſt down and diſquieted ô my ſoule?* This bitter taunt ran ſo much in his minde, that hee expreſſeth it twice in this Pſalme; He was ſenſible that they ſtruck at God through his ſides; what they ſpake in ſcorne and lightly, hee tooke heavily. And indeed, when religion ſuffers, if there be any heavenly fire in the heart, it will rather break out, then not diſcover itſelfe at all. Wee ſee by daily experience, that there is a ſpeciall force in words uttered from a ſubtle head, a falſe heart, and a ſmooth tongue, to weaken the hearts of profeſſors, by bringing an evill report upon the ſtrict profeſſion of religion: as the *cunning* and falſe *ſpies* did upon the *good land*, as if it were not onely in vaine, but dangerous to appeare for Chriſt in evill times. If the example of ſuch as have faint

Iudg. 1. 24.

faint ſpirits will diſcourage in an army, (as wee ſee in *Gideons* Hiſtory) then what will ſpeech inforced both by example and with ſome ſhew of reaſon doe?

Cap. 3. Iudges 7.

To let others paſſe, we need not goe further than our ſelves, for to finde cauſes of diſcouragement, there is a ſeminary of them within us. Our fleſh, an enemy ſo much the worſe, by how much the nearer, will be ready to upbraid us within us, *where is now thy God?* why ſhouldeſt thou ſtand out in a profeſſion that findes no better entertainment?

4. Diſcouragement comes frō our ſelves.

Cap. III.

Of diſcouragements from within.

But to come to ſome particular cauſes within us.

There is cauſe oft in the body of thoſe in whom a melancholly temper prevaileth, darkneſſe makes men fearefull: Melancholly perſons are in a perpetuall darkneſſe, all things ſeeme blacke

Cap. 3. blacke and darke unto them, their ſpirits as it were died black. Now to him that is in darkneſſe, all things ſeem black and dark, the ſweeteſt comforts are not lightſome enough unto thoſe that are deepe in melancholly. It is (without great watchfulneſſe) Satans bath; which hee abuſeth as his owne weapon to hurt the ſoule, which by reaſon of its ſympathy with the body is ſubject to be miſled: as we ſee where there is a ſuffuſion of the eye by reaſon of diſtemper of humours, or where things are preſented through a glaſſe to the eye; things ſeeme to be of the ſame colour: ſo, whatſoever is preſented to a melancholly perſon, comes in a darke way to the ſoule. From whence it is that their fancy being corrupted, they judge amiſſe, even of outward things, as that they are ſick of ſuch and ſuch a diſeaſe, or ſubject to ſuch and ſuch a danger, when it is nothing ſo; how fit are they then to judge of things removed from ſenſe, as of their ſpiritnall eſtate in Chriſt?

Simile.

5. A deluded fancy cauſes diſquietneſſe.

2. To come to cauſes more neere the ſoule

Cap. 3. Causes privative, of discouragement in our selves.

soule it selfe, as when there is want of that which should be in it, as of *knowledge* in the *understanding*, &c. Ignorance (being darkenesse) is full of false feares; In the night time men thinke every bush a theefe; our forefathers in time of ignorance were frighted with every thing, therefore it is the policy of popish tyrants taught them from the prince of darkenesse, to keep the people in darkenesse, that so they might make them fearfull, and then abuse that fearfulnesse to superstition; that they might the better rule in their consciences for their owne ends; and that so having intangled them with false feares, they might heale them again with false cures.

1. Ignorance in the understanding.

Againe, though the soule be not ignorant, yet if it be forgetfull and mindlesse, if, as Heb. 12. the Apostle saith, *You have forgot the consolation that speaks unto you*, &c. Wee have no more present actuall comfort, then we have remembrance: help a godly mans memory, and help his comfort, like unto charcoale which having once been kindled, are

2. Forgetfulnesse causeth discouragement.

Cap. 3.

are the more easie to take fire. Hee that hath formerly knowne things, takes ready acquaintance of them againe (as old friends:) things are not strange to him.

3. Not duely prizing of comforts.

And further, *want of setting due price upon comforts*; as the Israelites were taxed for setting nothing by the pleasant land. It is a great fault, when (as they said to *Iob*) *the consolations of the Almighty seeme light, and small unto us*, unlesse we have some outward comfort which we linger after.

Iob 15.11

4. A childish peevishnes

Adde unto this, *a childish kinde of peevishnesse:* when they have not what they would have, (like children) they throw away all; which (though it be very offensive to Gods Spirit) yet it seizeth often upon men otherwise gracious. *Abraham* himselfe (wanting children) undervalued all other blessings. *Ionas*, because hee was crossed of his gourd, was weary of his life. The like may be said of *Elias*, flying from *Iezebel*. This peevishnesse is increased by a too much flattering of their griefe, so farre as to justifie it; like *Ionas*, *I doe well*

Gen. 16.

1 Kings.

well to be angry even unto death, he would stand to it. Some with *Rachel* are so peremptory, that they *will not be comforted*, as if they were in love with their grievances. Wilfull men are most vexed in their crosses: It is not for those to be wilfull that have not a great measure of wisedome to guide their wils; for God delights to have his will of those that are wedded to their owne wils: as in *Pharaoh*. No men more subject to discontentments, than those who would have all things after their owne way.

Cap. 3. Ionah 4.9. Ier. 31. 15.

Againe, one maine ground is, *False reasoning*, and errour in our discourse, as that wee have no grace when we feele none, feeling it not alwaies a fit rule to judge our states by; that God hath rejected us, because we are crossed in outward things, when as this issues from Gods wisedome and love. How many imagine their *failings* to be *fallings*, and their *fallings*, to be *fallings away*? *Infirmities* to be *Presumptions*: every *sinne against Conscience*, to be the sinne against the *Holy Ghost*? unto which

5. False reasoning, erroneous discourse.

Cap. 3.

A double cunning of Satan, according to the humor of his patients.

which misapprehensions, weake and dark spirits are subject. And Satan (as a cunning Rhetorician) here inlargeth the fancy, to apprehend things bigger than they are, Satan abuseth confident spirits another contrary way: to apprehend great sinnes as little, and little as none. Some also think that they have no grace, because they have not so much as growne Christians: whereas, there be severall ages in Christ. Some againe are so desirous and inlarged after what they have not, that they minde not what they have. Men may be rich, though they have not millions, and be not Emperors.

6. A false method and order in judging of our estates

Likewise, some are much troubled, because they proceed by a false method and order in judging of their estates. They will begin with *Election*, which is the highest step of the ladder; whereas they should begin from a work of grace wrought within their hearts, from Gods calling them by his Spirit, and their answer to his call, and so raise themselves upwards to know their *Election* by their answer to Gods calling.

calling. *Give all diligence* ſaith *Peter*, to make your *calling* and *election ſure*: your *election* by your *calling*. God deſcends downe unto us from *election* to *calling*, and ſo to ſanctification: wee muſt aſcend to him beginning where he ends. Otherwiſe it is as great folly as in removing of a pile of wood, to begin at the loweſt firſt, and ſo (beſides the needleſſe trouble,) to be in danger to have the reſt fall upon our heads. Which beſides ignorance argues pride, appearing in this, that they would bring God to their conceits, and be at an end of their work before they beginne. Cap. 3. 2 Pet. 1.

This great ſecret of Gods eternall love to us in Chriſt, is hidden in his breaſt, and doth not appeare to us, untill in the uſe of meanes God by his Spirit diſcovereth the ſame unto us; The Spirit letteth into the ſoule ſo much life and ſenſe of Gods love in particular to us, as draweth the ſoule to Chriſt, from whom it draweth ſo much vertue as changeth the frame of it, and quickneth it to duty, which duties are not grounds

Cap. 3.

grounds of our ſtate in grace, but iſſues, ſpringing from a good ſtate before, & thus far they help us, in judging of our condition, that though they be not to be reſted in, yet as ſtreams they leade us to the ſpring head of grace from whence they ariſe.

And of ſignes, ſome be more apt to deceive us, as being not ſo certaine, as

Mat. 13. 20

delight and joy in hearing the Word, as appeareth in the *third ground*: ſome are more conſtant and certaine, as love to thoſe that are truely good, and to all ſuch, and becauſe they are ſuch, &c. theſe as they are wrought by the Spirit, ſo the ſame Spirit giveth evidence to the ſoule of the truth of them, and leadeth us to faith from whence they come, and faith leads us to the diſcovery of Gods love made knowne to us in hearing the word opened. The ſame Spirit openeth the truth to us, and our underſtandings to conceive of it, and our hearts to cloſe with it by faith, not only as a truth, but as a truth belonging to us.

Now this faith is manifeſted, either by

by it ſelfe reflecting upon it ſelfe the light of faith, diſcovering both it ſelfe and other things, or by the cauſe of it, or by the effect, or by all; Faith is oft more knowne to us in the fruit of it, then in it ſelfe; as in plants, the fruits are more apparant than the ſappe and roote. But the moſt ſetled knowledge is from the cauſe, as when I know I beleeve, becauſe in hearing Gods gracious promiſes opened and offered unto me, the Spirit of God carryeth my ſoule to cleave to them as mine owne portion. Yet the moſt familiar way of knowledge of our eſtates is from the effects to gather the cauſe, the cauſe being oftentimes more remote and ſpirituall, the effects more obvious and viſible. All the vigour and beauty in nature which we ſee, comes from a ſecret influence from the heavens which we ſee not; In a cleare morning wee may ſee the beames of the Sun ſhining upon the top of hils and houſes before wee can ſee the Sun it ſelfe. Cap. 3. Eph. 1. 13.

Things in the working of them, doe iſſue from the cauſe, by whoſe force they

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they had their being; but our knowing of things ariseth from the effect, where the cause endeth; wee know God must love us before wee can love him, and yet we oft *first* know that *we love him*; the love of God is the cause why wee love our brother, and yet we know we love *our brother whom we see* more clearly, *than God whom we doe not see.*

1 Iohn 4. 19.

1 Iohn 4. 20.

It is a spirituall peevishnesse that keepes men in a perplexed condition, that they neglect these helps to judge of their estates by, whereas God takes liberty to help us sometime to a discovery of our estate by the effects, sometimes by the cause, &c. And it is a sinne to set light by any work of the Spirit, and the comfort we might have by it, and therefore we may well adde this as one cause of disquietnesse in many, that they grieve the Spirit, by quarrelling against themselves, and the work of the Spirit in them.

Comfort sought in sanctification.

Another cause of disquiet is, that men by a naturall kind of Popery seek for their comfort too much in sanctification, neglecting justification, relying too

too much upon their own performances; Saint *Paul* was of another minde, *accounting all but dung and drosse, compared to the righteousnesse of Christ.* This is that garment, wherewith being decked we please our *husband*, and wherein we get the blessing. This giveth satisfaction to the conscience, as satisfying *God* himselfe, being performed by *God* the *Sonne*, and approved therefore by *God* the *Father*; Hereupon the soule is quiered, and *faith* holdeth out this *as a shield* against the displeasure of GOD, and temptations of Satan: why did the Apostles in their Prefaces joyne *grace and peace* together, but that we should seek for our *peace* in the free grace and favour of God in Christ. Cap. 5. Philip. 3.

No wonder why Papists maintaine doubting, who hold salvation by workes; because Satan joyning together with our consciences, will alwaies finde some flaw even in our best performances; Hereupon the doubting and misgiving soule comes to make this absurd demand, as, *Who shall ascend to heaven?* which is all one as to fetch Christ Psal. 24. 3.

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from heaven, and so bring him downe to suffer on the Crosse againe. Whereas if we beleeve in Christ, wee are as sure to come to heaven as Christ is there: Christ ascending and descending with all that hee hath done is ours. So that *neither height nor depth can separate us from Gods love in Christ.*

Rom. 8. 39

To have and maintaine true cõfort, we must grow up in holinesse.

But we must remember, though the maine pillar of our comfort bee in the free forgivenesse of our sinnes; yet if there be a neglect in growing in holinesse, the soule will never be soundly quiet, because it will be prone to question the truth of justification, and it is as proper for sinne to raise doubts and feares in the conscience, as for rotten flesh and wood to breed wormes. And therefore wee may well joyne this as a cause of disquietnesse, *the neglect of keeping a cleare conscience*. Sinne, like *Achan*, or *Ionas* in the ship, is that which causeth stormes within and without; where there is not a pure conscience, there is not a pacified conscience, and therefore though some thinking to salve themselves whole in justification,

8. Want of a cleare conscience raises tumults in the soul.

neglect

neglect the cleanſing of their natures, and ordering of their lives: yet in time of temptation, they will finde it more troubleſome than they thinke. For a conſcience guilty of many neglects, and of allowing it ſelfe in any ſin, to lay claime to Gods mercy, is to doe as we ſee mountebanks ſometimes doe, who wound their fleſh to try concluſions upon their owne bodies, how ſoveraigne the ſalve is; yet oftentimes they come to feele the ſmart of their preſumption, by long and deſperate wounds. So God will let us ſee what it is to make wounds to try the preciouſneſſe of his Balme: ſuch may goe mourning to their graves. And though (perhaps) with much wreſtling with God, they may get aſſurance of the pardon of their ſinnes, yet their conſcience will be ſtill trembling (like as *Davids*, though *Nathan* had pronounced unto him the forgiveneſſe of his ſin) till God at length ſpeakes further peace, even as the water of the ſea (after a ſtorme) is not preſently ſtill, but moves and trembles a good while after the ſtorme

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Pſal. 51.

Cap. 3. Gal.6.16. is over. A Christian is a new creature, and walketh by rule, and so farre as hee walketh *according to his rule peace is upon him.* Loose walkers that regard not their way, must think to meet with sorrowes in stead of peace. Watchfulnesse is the preserver of peace. It is a deep spirituall judgement to find peace in an ill way.

Ignorance of our Christian liberty. Some againe, reape the fruit of their *ignorance of Christian libertie*, by unnecessary scruples and doubts. It is both unthankfulnesse to God, and wrong to our selves, to be ignorant of the exrent of Christian liberty; *It makes melody to Satan, to see Christians troubled with that they neither should or need.* Yet there is danger in stretching Christian liberty beyond the bounds. For a man may condemne himself in that he approves, as in not walking circumspectly in regard of circumstances, and so breed his owne disquiet, and give scandall to others.

Danger of abusing Christian liberty.

10. Want of imployment. Sometimes also, God suffers men to be disquieted for want of imployment, who in shunning labour, procure trou-

ble

ble to themſelves; and by not doing that which is needfull, they are troubled with that which is unneceſſary. *An unimployed life is a burden to it ſelfe.* God is a pure Act, alwayes working, alwaies doing: and the neerer our ſoule comes to God, the more it is in action, and the freer from diſquiet. Men experimentally feele that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them, which before they longed for, and went without; a heart not exerciſed in ſome honeſt labour, workes trouble out of it ſelfe. Cap. 3.

II. Omiſſion of offices and duties of love.

Againe, Omiſſion of duties and offices of love, often troubles the peace of good people; for even in the time of death when they looke for peace and deſire it moſt, then looking backe upon their former failings, and ſeeing opportunity of doing good wanting to their deſire; (the parties perhaps being deceaſed to whom they owed more reſpect) are hereupon much diſquieted, and ſo much the more, becauſe they ſee now hope of the like advantages cut off.

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A Christian life is full of duties, and the peace of it is not maintained without much fruitfulnesse and looking about us: debt is a disquieting thing to an honest minde, and *duty is debt*. Here-
Rom. 13.8. upon the Apostle layeth the charge, *that we should owe nothing to any man, but love.*

12. Want of resolution in good things.

Againe, one speciall cause of too much disquiet, is, *want of firme resolution in good things.* The soule cannot but bee disquieted when it knowes not what to cleave unto, like a ship tossed with contrary windes; Halting is a deformed and troublesome gesture; so halting in Religion, is not onely troublesome to others, and odious, but also
1 Kings 18.21. *disquiet* our selves. *If God be God, cleave to him.* If the duties of religion be such as will bring peace of conscience at the length, be religious to purpose, practice them in the particular passages of life. Wee should labour to have a cleare judgement, and from thence a resolved
Iames 1.6. purpose; *a wavering* minded man is inconstant in all his wayes. God will not speake peace to a staggering spirit

that

that hath alwaies its religion, and its way to chooſe. Uncertaine men are alwaies unquiet men: and giving too much way to paſſion maketh men in particular conſultations unſetled. This is the reaſon why in particular caſes when the matter concerns our ſelves, we cannot judge ſo clearly as in general truths, becauſe Satan raiſeth a miſt between us and the matter in queſtion. Cap. 3.

2 *Poſitive Cauſes*

May be, 1. *When men lay up their comfort too much on outward things*, which being ſubject to much inconſtancy and change, breed diſquiet. Vexation alwaies followes vanity, when vanity is not aphrehended to be where it is. In that meaſure we are caſt downe in the diſappointing of our hopes, as wee were too much lifted up in expectation of good from them. Whence proceed theſe complaints; ſuch a friend hath failed mee: I never thought to have fallen into this condition; I had ſetled my joy in this childe, in this friend, &c. but this is to build our comfort upon things that have no firm founda- Whē men lay up too much comfort in outward things.

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foundation, to build caſtles in the aire (as wee uſe to ſay.) Therefore it is a good deſire of the wiſeman *Agur*, to deſire God, *to remove from us vanity and lies*, that is, a vaine and a falſe apprehenſion pitching upon things that are vaine and lying, promiſing a contentment to our ſelves from the creature, which it cannot yeeld; confidence in vaine things makes a vaine heart, the heart becomming of the nature of the thing it relies on: wee may ſay of all earthly things as the Prophet ſpeaketh, *Here is not our reſt.*

Prov. 30.

Mich. 2. 10

It is no wonder therefore, that worldly men are oft *caſt downe* and *diſquieted*, when they *walke in a vaine ſhadow*, as likewiſe that men given much to recreations ſhould be ſubject to paſſionate diſtemper, becauſe here things fall out otherwiſe than they lookt for: recreations being about matters that are variable, which eſpecially fals out in games of hazard, wherein they oft ſpare not Divine Providence it ſelf, but break out into blaſphemy.

Pſal. 39.

Likewiſe men that graſpe more *buſineſſes*

fineſſes than they can diſcharge, muſt needs beare both the blame and the griefe of loſing or marring many buſineſſes. It being almoſt impoſſible to doe many things ſo well as to give content to Conſcience; Hence it is that covetous and buſie men trouble both their hearts and their houſes; though ſome men from a largeneſſe of parts, and a ſpeciall dexterity in affaires may turne over much; yet the moſt capacious heart hath its meaſure, and when the cup is full, a little drop may cauſe the reſt to ſpill. There is a ſpirituall ſurfet, when the ſoule is over-charged with buſineſſe; it is fit the ſoule ſhould have its meet burthen and no more. Cap. 3.

As likewiſe, thoſe that depend too much upon the opinions of other men; A very light matter will refreſh, and then againe diſcourage a minde that reſts too much upon the liking of others. Men that ſeeke themſelves too much abroad, finde themſelves diſquieted at home; even good men many times are too much troubled with the unjuſt cenſures of other men, ſpecially in

2. Too much relying upon the opinions of others. *Sic leve ſic parvum eſt animum quod laudis averſum, ſubruit aut reficit.*

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in the day of their trouble: It was *Iobs* caſe; and it is a heavy thing to have affliction added to affliction: It was *Hannahs* caſe, who being *troubled in ſpirit*, was cenſured by *Eli*, for *diſtemper in braine*; but for vain men who live more to reputation than to conſcience, it cannot be that they ſhould long enjoy ſetled quiet, becauſe thoſe in whoſe good opinion they deſire to dwell, are ready often to take up contrary conceits upon ſlender grounds.

1 Sam. 1. 14

3. Too much looking & poring on evils, in our ſelves and abroad.

It is alſo a ground of overmuch trouble, when we looke too much and too long upon the ill in our ſelves and abroad; we may fixe our eyes too long even upon ſinne it ſelfe, conſidering that wee have not onely a remedy againſt the hurt by ſinne, but a commandement *to rejoyce alwaies in the Lord.* Much more may we erre in poring too much upon our afflictions; wherein wee may finde alwaies in our ſelves upon ſearch, a cauſe to juſtifie God, and alwaies ſomething left to comfort us: Though we naturally minde more one croſſe than a hundred favours, dwelling

Philip. 4. 4.

ling over-long upon the ſore. Cap. 3.

So like wiſe, our mindes may be too much taken up in conſideration of the *miſeries of the times* at home and abroad, as if Chriſt did not rule in the midſt of his enemies, and would not help all in due time; or as if the condition of the Church in this world, were not for the moſt part in an afflicted and conflicting condition. Indeed there is a perfect reſt both for the ſoules and bodies of Gods people, but that is not in this world, but is kept for hereafter, here we are in a ſea, where what can we look for, but ſtormes?

To inſiſt upon no more, one cauſe is, that wee doe uſurpe upon God, and take his office upon us, by troubling our ſelves in forecaſting the event of things, whereas our worke is onely to doe our worke and be quiet, as children when they pleaſe their parents take no further thought; our trouble is the fruit of our folly in this kinde.

That which we ſhould obſerve from all that hath beene ſaid is, that wee be not over-haſty in cenſuring others, *Vſe* 1.

when

Cap. 3. when wee ſee their ſpirits out of temper, for we ſee how many things there are that work ſtrongly upon the weak nature of man. *We may ſin more by harſh cenſure, than they by overmuch diſtemper:* as in *Iobs* caſe, it was a matter rather of juſt griefe and pity, than great wonder or heavy cenſure.

Vſe 2. And, for our ſelves: If our eſtate be calme for the preſent, yet wee ſhould labour to prepare our hearts, not onely for an alteration of eſtate, but of ſpirit, unleſſe wee be marvellous carefull before hand, that our ſpirits fall not down with our Condition. And if it befalls us to find it otherwiſe with our ſoules then at other times, we ſhould ſo farre labour to beare it, as that wee doe not judge it our owne caſe alone, when we ſee here *David* thus to complaine of himſelfe, *Why art thou caſt downe O my ſoule? &c.*

CHAP.

Cap. 4.

CAP. IV.

Of casting downe our selves, and specially by sorrow. Evils thereof.

TO returne againe to the words, *Why art thou cast downe ô my soule? &c.* or, *Why dost thou cast downe thy selfe?* or, *art cast downe by thy selfe?* Whence we may further observe, *That wee are prone to cast downe our selves*, wee are accessary to our owne trouble, and weave the web of our owne sorrow, and hamper our selves in the cords of our owne twining. God neither loves nor wills that we should be too much cast down. Wee see our Saviour Christ how carefull hee was that his *Disciples* should not bee troubled, and therefore hee labours to prevent that trouble which might arise by his suffering and departure from them, by a heavenly sermon; *Let not your hearts be troubled, &c.* Hee was troubled himselfe that wee should not bee troubled: The ground therefore of our disquiet is chiefly from our selves,

Obser. 1.

Iohn 14. 1

Cap. 4. ſelves, though Satan will have a hand in it. We ſee many like ſullen birds in a cage, beat themſelves to death. This caſting downe of our ſelves, is not from humility, but from Pride, wee muſt have our will, or God ſhall not have a good look from us, but as pettiſh and peeviſh children, we hang our heads in our boſome, becauſe our wils are croſt.

Vſe. Therefore in all our troubles wee ſhould looke firſt home to our owne hearts, and ſtop the ſtorme there; for wee may thanke our owne ſelves, not onely for our troubles, but likewiſe for overmuch troubling our ſelves in trouble. It was not the troubled condition that ſo diſquieted *Davids* ſoule, for if hee had had a quiet minde, it would not have troubled him. But *David* yeelded to the diſcouragements of the fleſh, and the fleſh (ſo far as it is unſubdued) is like the ſea that is alwayes caſting mire and dirt of doubts, diſcouragements and murmurings in the ſoule; let us therefore lay the blame where it is to be laid.

Againe,

Againe, we ſee, *it is the nature of ſorrow to caſt downe, as of joy to lift up.* Griefe is like lead to the ſoule, heavie and cold; it ſinks downwards, and carries the ſoule with it. The poore *Publican* to ſhew that his ſoule was caſt downe under the ſight of his ſinnes, hung downe his head, the poſition of his body was ſutable to the diſpoſition of his minde, his heart and head were caſt downe alike; And it is Satans practice to goe over the hedge where it is loweſt: hee addes more weights to the ſoule, by his tentations and vexations. His ſinne caſt him out of heaven, and by his temptations, hee caſt us out of our Paradice, and ever ſince, he labours to caſt us deeper into ſinne, wherein his ſcope is, to caſt us either into too much trouble for ſin, or preſumption in ſinne, which is but a lifting up, to caſt us down into deep deſpaire at length, and ſo at laſt (if Gods mercy ſtop not his malice) he will caſt us as low as himſelfe, even into hell it ſelfe.

Cap. 4. Obſer. 2.

Luk. 18. 13

Reaſon. How ſorrow doth weaken the ſoule.

The ground hereof is, becauſe *as the joy of the Lord doth ſtrengthen, ſo doth*

Cap. 4. *ſorrow weaken the ſoule*. How doth it weaken?

1. 1, By weakning the execution of the functions thereof, becauſe it drinketh up the ſpirits, which are the inſtruments of the ſoule.

2. 2. Becauſe it contracteth, and draweth the ſoule into it ſelfe from communion of that comfort it might have with God or man. And then the ſoule being left alone, if *it falleth*, hath none to *raiſe it up*.

Eccle. 4. 10

Vſe. How to prevent caſting down

Therefore, if wee will prevent caſting downe, let us *prevent griefe the cauſe of it*, and finne the cauſe of that. Experience proves that true which the Wiſeman ſayes, *Heavineſſe in the heart of a man makes it ſtoope, but a good word makes it better.* It bowes downe the ſoule, and therefore our bleſſed Saviour inviteth ſuch unto him; *Come unto mee yee who are heavy laden with the burden of your ſinnes.* The body bends under a heavy burden, ſo likewiſe the ſoule hath its burden, *Why art thou caſt downe O my ſoule? Why ſo diſquieted? &c.*

Pro. 12. 25.

Mat. 11.

Whence,

Whence, wee ſee 1. that caſting downe breeds diſquieting: Becauſe it ſprings from pride, which is a turbulent Paſſion, when as men cannot ſtoope to that condition which God would have them in; this proceeds from diſcontentment, and that from pride. As wee ſee, a vapour incloſed in a cloud cauſeth a terrible noiſe of thunder, whilſt it is pent up there, and ſeeketh a vent; So all the noiſe within proceeds from a diſcontented ſwelling vapour. It is aire incloſed in the bowels of the earth which ſhakes it, which all the foure windes cannot doe. Cap. 4. Obſer. 1. Reaſon.

No creature under heaven ſo low caſt downe as Satan, none more lifted up in pride, none ſo full of diſcord; the impureſt ſpirits are the moſt diſquiet and ſtormy ſpirits, troubleſome to themſelves and others; for when the ſoule leaves GOD once, and lookes downewards, what is there to ſtay it from diſquiet? remoove the needle from the pole ſtarre, and it is alwaies ſtirring and trembling, never quiet till it be right againe. So diſplace the ſoule

Cap. 4.

by taking it from God, and it will never bee quiet. The devill cast out of heaven and out of the Church, keepes a dooe, so doe unruly spirits led by him.

Remedies against casting down and disquieting.

Now I come to the remedies,

1. *By expostulation with himselfe.*
2. *By laying a charge upon himselfe: (Trust in God.)*

It is supposed here, that there is no reason (which the wisedome from above allowes to be a reason) why men should bee discouraged, although the wisedome from beneath which takes part with our corruption, will seldome want a plea. Nay there is not onely no reason for it, but there are strong reasons against it, there being a world of evill in it.

Reasons against discouragement.

1. It indispose to all good duties.

For, 1. It indispose a man to all good duties, it makes him like an instrument out of tune, and like a body out of joint, that moveth both uncomely and painfully. It unfits to duties to God, who loves a cheerefull giver, and especially a thanksgiver. Whereupon the Apostle joynes them both together,

In

In all things be thankfull, and *rejoyce evermore.* In our communion with God in the Sacraments, joy is a chiefe ingredient. So in duties to men, if the ſpirit be dejected, they are unwelcome, and loſe the greateſt part of their life and grace; A cheerefull and a free ſpirit in duty is that which is moſt accepted in duty. We obſerve not ſo much what, as from what affection a thing is done. Cap. 4. 1 Theſſ. 5.

2. It is a great wrong to God himſelfe, and it makes us conceive blacke thoughts of him, as if He were an enemie. What an injury is it to a gracious father, that ſuch whom he hath followed with many gracious evidences of his favour and love, ſhould be in ſo ill a frame, as once to call it into queſtion? 2. It wrongs God, making us think amiſſe of him.

3. So, it makes a man forgetfull of all former bleſſings, and ſtops the influence of Gods grace, for the time preſent, and for that to come. 3. It makes a man forget former bleſſings, &c.

4. So againe, For receiving of good: It makes us unfit to receive mercies; a quiet ſoule is the ſeat of wiſedome. Therefore, *Meekneſſe* is required for the 4. It makes us unfit to receive good.

Cap. 4. Iam. 1.21.

receiving of that ingrafted word which is able to ſave our ſoules. Till the Spirit of God *meekens* the ſoule, (ſay what you will) it mindes nothing, the ſoule is not empty and quiet enough to receive the ſeed of the Word. It is ill ſowing in a ſtorme, ſo a ſtormy ſpirit will not ſuffer the Word to take place. *Men are deceived when they thinke a dejected ſpirit to be an humbled ſpirit.* Indeed it is ſo when wee are caſt downe in the ſenſe of our owne unworthineſſe, and then as much raiſed up in the confidence of Gods mercy. But when wee caſt our ſelves downe ſullenly, and neglect our comforts, or undervalue them, it proceeds from pride, for it controules (as much as in us lies) the wiſedome and juſtice of God, when wee thinke with our ſelves, why ſhould it be ſo with us? as if wee were wiſer to diſpoſe of our ſelves than God is. It diſpoſeth us for entertaining any temptation. Satan hath never more advantage than upon diſcontent.

5. It hinders beginners comming into Gods wayes.

5. Beſides, it keepes off beginners from comming in, and entring into the wayes

waies of God, bringing an ill report upō religion, causing men to charge it falsly for an uncomfortable way, when as men never feele what true comfort meaneth, till they give up themselves to God. And it damps likewise the spirits of those that walke the same way with us, when as wee should (as good travellers) cheere up one another both by word and example. In such a case, the wheeles of the soule are taken off, or else, (as it were) want oyle, whereby the soule passeth on very heavily, and no good action comes off from it as it should, which breeds not onely uncomfortablenesse, but unsetledneſſe in good courses. For a man will never goe on comfortably, and constantly in that which hee heavily undertakes. That's the reason why uncheerefull spirits seldome hold out as they should. Saint *Peter* knew this well, and therefore hee willeth, that there should be *quietnesse and peace betwixt husband and wife, that their prayers be not hindered*; Insinuating that their prayers are hindered by family breaches. For by that meanes, Cap. 4. 1 Pet. 3.

Cap. 4. thoſe two (that ſhould be one fleſh and ſpirit) are divided, and ſo made two, and when they ſhould minde duty, their minde is taken up with wrongs done by the one to the other.

There is nothing more required for the performing of holy duties than uniting of ſpirits; and therefore God Mat. 5. 24. would not have the ſacrifice brought to the Altar, before reconciliation with our brother. He eſteemes peace ſo highly, that hee will have his owne ſervice ſtay for it. We ſee when *Moſes* came to Exodus 9. deliver the *Iſraelites out of bondage*, their minde was ſo taken up with their griefe, that there was no body within to give *Moſes* an anſwere, their ſoules went altogether after their ill uſage.

Vſe. Therefore wee ſhould all endeavour and labour for a calmed ſpirit; that we may the better ſerve God in praying to him, and praiſing of him; and ſerve one another in love, that we may be fitted to doe and receive good: that wee may make our paſſage to heaven more eaſie and cheerefull, without drooping and hanging the wing. So much

much as we are quiet and cheerefull upon good grounds, ſo much we live, and are as it were in heaven. So much as we yeeld to diſcouragement, wee loſe ſo much of our life and happineſſe, cheerefulneſſe being (as it were) that life of our lives, and the ſpirit of our ſpirits by which they are more inlarged to receive happineſſe and to expreſſe it. Cap. 5.

Cap. V.

Remedies of caſting down: To cite the ſoule: and preſſe it to give an account.

BUt to come to ſome helps.

Firſt, in that hee expoſtulates with himſelfe, wee may obſerve, that *One way to raiſe a dejected ſoule, is, to cite it before it ſelfe, and as it were to reaſon the caſe.* God hath ſet up a court in mans heart, wherein, the conſcience hath the office, both of *Informer, accuſer, witneſſe,* and *Iudge*: And if matters were well carryed within our ſelves, this prejudging would be a prevention of future judging. It is a great mercy of *Obſer.* 1.

The court of conſcience in man.

Cap. 5.

of God, that the credit and comfort of man are so provided for, that he may take up matters in himselfe, and so prevent publike disgrace. But if there be not a faire dispatch and transaction in this inferiour court within us, there will bee a review in a higher court. Therefore by slubbering over our matters, we put God and our selves to more trouble than needs. For a judgement must passe first, or last, either within us or without us, upon all unwarrantable distempers. We must not onely be ready to give an account of our *faith*, upon what Grounds we beleeve; but of all our *actions*, upon what grounds wee doe what wee doe; and of *our Passions*, upon what ground wee are passionate: as in a well governed State, uprore and sedition is never stirred, but account must be given. Now in a mutiny, the presence and speech of a venerable man, composeth the minds of the disordered multitude; so likewise in a mutiny of the Spirit, the authority that God hath put into Reason (as a beame of himselfe) commands silence, and puts

Iudgement must passe first or last, without or within upon us.

puts all in order againe. Cap. 5.

Reason.

And there is good reason for it, for man is an understanding creature, and hath a rule given him to live by, and therefore is to be countable of every *thought, word, action, passion.* Therefore the first way to quiet the soule, is, to aske a reason of the tumult raised, and then many of our distempers for shame will not appeare, because (though they rage in silent darkenesse) yet they can say nothing for themselves, being summoned before strength of judgement and reason. Which is the reason why passionate men are loath that any court should be kept within them; but labour to stop judgement all they can. If men would but give themselves leave to consider better of it, they would never yeeld to such unreasonable motions of the soule: If they could but gaine so much of their unruly passions, as to reason the matter within themselves, to heare what their consciences can tell them in secret, there would not be such offensive breakings out. And therefore, if we be ashamed to heare others upbraiding

Distempers fall downe when they arearraigned before Reason.

Want of consideration, raises and maintaines our distempers

Cap. 5.

In discouragement, we crosse our owne principles.

upbraiding us, let us for shame hear our selves; And if no reason can be given, what an unreasonable thing is it for a man endowed with reason to contrary his owne principles? and to be carried as a beast without reason; or if there be any reason to be given, then, this is the way to scanne it, see whether it will hold water or not. We shall finde some reasons (if they may be so called) to be so corrupt and foule, that (if the judgement be not corrupted by them) they dare not be brought to light, but alwaies appeare under some colour and pretext, for sinne (like the devill) is affraid to appeare in its owne likenesse, and men seek out faire glosses, for foule intentions. The hidden secret reason is one, the open is another: the heart being corrupt, sets the wit aworke, to satisfie corrupt will; such kinde of men are afraid of their owne consciences (as *Ahab* of *Michaiah*) because they feare it would deale truly with them: and therefore they take either present order for their consciences, or else (as *Felix* put off *Paul*) they adjorne the court

Corruption of the heart sets the wit a worke.

1 King. 22.

Acts 24. 25

court for another time. Such men are strangers at home, afraid of nothing more than of themselves, and therefore in a fearefull condition, because they are reserved for the *judgement of the great day*, if GOD doth not before that set upon them in this world. If men carryed away with their own lusts, would give but a little check, and stop themselves in their posting to hell, and aske, *What have I done? What am I now about? Whither will this course tend? How will it end? &c.* Undoubtedly men would begin to be wise. Would the blasphemer give away his soule for nothing (for there is no engagement of profit or pleasure in this, as in other sins, but it issues meerly out of irreverence, and a superfluity of prophaneneſſe;) would hee (I say) draw so heavy a guilt upon himselfe for nothing, if he would but make use of his reason? Would an old man (when hee is very neare his journies end) make longer provision for a short way if hee would aske himselfe a Reason? But indeed Covetousneſſe is an unreasonable vice.

Cap. 5.

The soules expostulation.

Blaspheming, whence.

If

Cap. 5. A leſſon for young men.

If thoſe alſo of the *younger ſort* would aſke of themſelves, *Why God ſhould not have the flower and marrow of their age? and why they ſhould give their ſtrength to the devill?* It might a little take them off from the devils ſervice. But ſinne is a work of darkneſſe, and therefore ſhuns not onely the light of grace, but even the light of reaſon. Yet ſinne ſeldome wants a ſeeming reaſon, *Men will not goe to hell without a ſhew of reaſon.* But ſuch be ſophiſticall fallacies, not reaſons; and therefore ſinners are ſaid to play the ſophiſters with themſelves: *Satan could not deceive us, unleſſe wee deceived our ſelves firſt, and are willingly deceived:* wilfull ſinners are blinde, becauſe they put out the light of reaſon, and ſo thinke God (like themſelves) blinde too; and therefore they are deſervedly termed mad men and fooles; for, did they but make uſe of that ſpark of reaſon, it would teach them to reaſon thus; *I cannot give an account of my wayes to my ſelfe: what account ſhall I, or can I give then, to the Iudge of all fleſh ere it be long?*

Sin is unreaſonable ſo much the more, as without reaſon, it pretends reaſons.

Pſal 50.

And

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And as it is a ground of repentance, in ſtopping our courſe to aſke *what have I done?* So likewiſe of faith and new obedience, to aſke *what ſhall I doe for the time to come?* and then upon ſetling, the ſoule in way of thankes, will be ready to aſke of it ſelfe, *What ſhall I returne to the Lord? &c.* So that the ſoule by this dealing with it ſelfe, promoteth it ſelfe to all holy duties till it come to heaven.

Reaſ. 1. Why wee are ſo backward to keepe court in our ſelves.

The reaſon why wee are thus backward to the keeping of this court in our ſelves, is *ſelfe-love*: we love to flatter our owne affections, *but this ſelfe-love, is but ſelfe-hatred in the end*; (as the Wiſeman ſaies) he that regards not this part of wiſdome, *hates his owne ſoule, and ſhall eate the fruits of his owne wayes.*

2. Irkſomneſſe of labour.

2. As likewiſe it iſſues from an irkſomneſſe of labour, which makes us rather willing to ſeeme baſe and vile to our ſelves and others, than to take paines with our owne hearts to be better, as thoſe that are weary of holding the reines, give them up unto the horſe necke, and ſo are driven whither the rage

Cap. 5. rage of the horſe caryeth them: *ſparing a little trouble at firſt, doubles it in the end*; as hee who will not take the paines to caſt up his books, his books will caſt up him in the end. *It is a bleſſed trouble that brings ſound and long peace:* This labour ſaves God a labour, for therefore he *judgeth us*, becauſe wee would not take paines with our ſelves before.

1 Cor. 11. 31

3. Pride. 3. And *Pride* alſo, with a deſire of liberty, makes men thinke it to be a diminiſhing of greatneſſe and freedome, either to be curbed, or to curbe our ſelves: Wee love to be abſolute, and independant; but this, as it brought ruine upon our nature in *Adam*; ſo it will upon our perſons. Men (as *Luther* was wont to ſay) are borne with a Pope in their belly, they are loath to give an account, although it be to themſelves, their wils are in ſtead of a kingdome to them.

Mens mihi pro regno.

Let us therefore (when any lawleſſe paſſions begin to ſtir) deale with our ſoules as God did with *Ionah*; *Doeſt thou well to be angry?* to fret thus? This will be a meanes to make us quiet. For, alas, what

Ionah 4.

what weake reasons have wee often of strong motions; such a man gave mee no respect, such another lookt more kindly upon another man than upon me,&c. You have some of *Hamans* spirit, that for a little neglect, would ruine a whole nation. Passion presents men that are innocent as guilty to us, and because wee will not seeme to be mad without reason, *Pride* commands the wit to justifie anger, and so one Passion maintaines and feeds another. Cap. 5. Ester 5. *Facit iratos innocentes.*

Neither is it sufficient to *cite the soule before it selfe; but, it must be pressed to give an account*, as we see here, *David* doubles, and trebles the expostulation; as oft as any distemper did arise, so oft did he labour to keep it downe. If passions grow too insolent, *Elies* mildnesse will doe no good. It would prevent much trouble in this kinde, to subdue betimes (in our selves and others) the first beginnings of any unruly passions and affections; which (if they be not well tutord and disciplined at the first) prove as headstrong, unruly, and ill nurtured children, who (being not chastened *Obser.* 2. 1 Sam. 2. 24

Cap. 5.

ſtened in time) take ſuch a head, that it is (oft) above the power of parents to bring them in order. A childe ſet at liberty (ſaith *Salomon*) *breeds ſhame (at length) to his parents.* *Adonizeths* example ſhewes this. The like may bee ſaid of the affections ſet at liberty; It is dangerous to redeeme a little quiet by yeelding to our affections, which is never ſafely gotten but by mortification of them.

Pro. 29. 15.

Thoſe that are in great place, are moſt in danger, by yeelding to themſelves, to loſe themſelves; for they are ſo taken up with the perſon for a time put upon them, that they, both in look, and ſpeech, and cariage, often ſhew that they forget both their naturall condition as men, and much more their ſupernaturall as Chriſtians; and therefore are ſcarce counſellable by others or themſelves, in thoſe things that concerne their ſevered condition that concerneth another world. Whereas it were moſt wiſdome ſo to think of their place they beare, whereby they are called *gods*, as not to forget they muſt lay their

Pſal. 82. 6, 7.

their person aside, and *die like men: David* himselfe that in his afflicted condition could advise with himselfe, and checke himselfe, yet in his free and flourishing estate neglected the counsell of his friends. *Agur* was in jealousie of a full condition, and lest in stead of saying, What have I done? why am I thus cast downe? &c. he should say, *Who is the Lord?* Cap. 5. 2 Sam. 24 4 Prov. 30 9.

Meaner men in their lesser spheare, often shew what their spirits would be, if their compasse were inlarged.

It is a great fault in breeding youth, for feare of taking downe of their spirits, not to take downe their pride, and get victory of their affections; whereas a proud unbroken heart raiseth us more trouble often than all the world beside. Of all troubles, the trouble of a proud heart is the greatest; It was a great trouble to *Haman* to leade *Mordecaies horse*, which another man would not have thought so; the moving of a straw is troublesome to proud flesh. And therefore it is good to *beare the yoake from our youth*, It is better to bee Hester 6. 12. Lam. 3. 27.

Cap. 5. taken downe in youth, then to be broken in pieces by great crosses in age. First or last, selfe-deniall and victory over our selves is absolutely necessary; otherwise *faith* which is a grace that requireth selfe-deniall, will never be brought into the soule, and beare rule there.

Quest. But, *what if pressing upon our soules will not help?*

Answ. Then speake to God, to Jesus Christ by prayer, that as he rebuked the winds and the waves, and went upon the Sea, so he would walke upon our soules, and command a calme there. It is no lesse power to settle a peace in the soule, than to command the seas to be quiet. It is Gods prerogative to rule in the heart, as likewise to give it up to it self, which (next to hell) is the greatest judgement; which should draw us to the greater reverence and feare of displeasing God. It was no ill wish of him, that desired God, to free him from an ill man, himselfe.

Domine, libera me à malo hominis ipso.

CHAP.

Cap. 6.

CAP. VI.

Other Observations of the same nature.

MOreover wee see that *a godly man can cast a restraint upon himselfe*, as *David* here staies himselfe in falling. There is a principle of grace, that stops the heart, and puls in the reines againe when the affections are loose. A carnall man, when he begins to be cast downe, sinkes lower and lower, untill he sinkes into despaire, as leade sinkes into the bottome of the sea. *They sunke, they sunke, like lead in the mighty waters.* A carnall man sinkes as a heavy body to the center of the earth, and staies not, if it be not stopped: There is nothing in him to stay him in falling, as wee see in *Achitophel* and *Saul*: who (wanting a support) found no other stay, but the swords point. And the greater their parts and places are, the more they intangle themselves; and no wonder, for they are to encounter with God and his deputy *conscience*, who is

Obser. 3.

Exod. 15. 5

2 Sam. 17. 23.

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King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. When *Cain* was cast out of his fathers house, his heart and countenance was alwaies cast downe; for he had nothing in him to lift it upwards. But a godly man, though he may give a little way to passion; yet (as *David*) hee recovers himselfe. Therefore as we would have any good evidence, that we have a better spirit in us than our owne, greater than the flesh or the world, Let us (in all troubles wee meet with) gather up our selves, that the streame of our own affections carry us not away too far.

There is an art of bearing troubles.

There is an art or skill of bearing troubles, (if wee could learne it) without overmuch troubling of our selves; As in bearing of a burthen there is a way so to poize it, that it weigheth not over heavy: If it hangs all on one side, it poizes the body downe. The greater part of our troubles wee pull upon our selves, by not parting our care so, as to take upon us onely the care of duty, and leave the rest to God; and by mingling our passions with our crosses; and (like a foolish patient) chewing

ing the pills which we ſhould ſwallow downe. We dwell too much upon the griefe, when wee ſhould remove the ſoule higher. Wee are neareſt neighbours unto our ſelves; when we ſuffer griefe (like a canker) to eate into the ſoule, and (like a fire in the bones) to conſume the marrow and drink up the ſpirits, wee are acceſſary to the wrong done both to our bodies and ſoules: we waſt our owne candle, and put out our light. Cap. 6.

We ſee here againe, that *a godly man can make a good uſe of Privacy.* When he is forced to be alone, he can talke with his God and himſelfe; one reaſon whereof is, that his heart is a treaſury and ſtorehouſe of divine truthes, whence he can ſpeake to himſelfe, by way of checke, or incouragement of himſelfe: he hath a ſpirit over his own ſpirit, to teach him to make uſe of that ſtore hee hath laid up in his heart, the ſpirit is never neerer him then when by way of witneſſe to his ſpirit hee is thus comforted; wherein the childe of God differs from another man, who cannot Obſer. 4.

The cauſe why wicked men cannot endure ſolitarineſſe.

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endure solitarinesse, because his heart is empty; he was a stranger to God before, and God is a stranger to him now; So that he cannot goe to God as a friend. And for his conscience, that is ready to speake to him, that which hee is loath to heare: and therefore, hee counts himselfe a torment to himselfe, especially in privacy.

As Charles the ninth after the Massacre in France. *Thuanus, li. 57. Somnii post casum Sanbartholomæum nocturni horrores plerumque interrumpebant & rursus adhibiti symphoniaci expergefacto conciliabant.*

We reade of great Princes who after some bloody designes, were as terrible to themselves as they were formerly to others, and therefore could never endure to be awaked in the night, without Musique, or some like diversion. It may be, wee may be cast into such a condition, (where we have none in the world to comfort us) as in contagious sicknesse, when none may come neare us, we may be in such an estate wherein no friend will owne us. And therefore let us labour now to bee acquainted with God and our owne hearts; and acquaint our hearts with the comforts of the holy Ghost; then, though wee have not so much as a booke to looke on, or a friend to talke with, yet wee may

may looke with comfort into the book of our owne heart, and reade what God hath written there by the finger of his Spirit: all bookes are written to amend this one booke of our heart and conscience; by this meanes we shall never want a Divine to comfort us, a Physitian to cure us, a Counseller to direct us, a Musitian to cheare us, a Controller to check us, because (by help of the Word and Spirit) we can be all these to our selves. Cap. 6. *Ideo scribuntur omnes libri ut emendetur unus.*

Another thing we see here, that God hath made every man a Governour over himselfe. The poore man that hath none to governe, yet may hee be a King in himselfe. It is the naturall ambition of mans heart to desire governement, as wee see in the *Bramble*; Well then, let us make use of this disposition, to rule our selves. *Absalom* had high thoughts; O, If I were a King, I would doe so and so. So our hearts are ready to promise, If I were as such and such a man, in such and such a place, I would doe this and that. *Obser.* 5. Iudges 9.

But how dost thou manage thine owne

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owne affections? how doſt thou rule in thine owne houſe? in thy ſelfe? doe not paſſions get the upper hand, and keepe reaſon under foot? When wee have learned to rule over our owne ſpirits well, then we may be fit to rule over others. *He that is faithfull in a little, ſhall bee ſet over more. Hee that can governe himſelfe* (in the Wiſe-mans judgement) *is better then he that can governe a City.* Hee that cannot, *is like a City without a wall*, where thoſe that are in may goe out, and the enemies without, may come in at their pleaſure. So where there is not a government ſet up, there ſinne breaks out, and Satan breaks in without controule.

Mat. 25. 21

Pro. 16. 32.

Obſer. 6.

See againe, the *excellency of the ſoule, that can reflect upon it ſelfe, and judge of whatſoever comes from it:* A godly mans care and trouble is eſpecially about his ſoule, as *David* here lookes principally to that, becauſe all outward troubles are for to help that; when God touches our bodies, our eſtates, or our friends, hee aimes at the ſoule in all. God will never remove his hand,

All outward troubles are for to help the ſoule.

hand, till ſomething be wrought upon the ſoule, as *Davids moyſture was as the drought in Summer*, ſo that hee roared, and carried himſelfe unſeemely (for ſo great and holy a man) till his heart was ſubdued to deale without all guile with God in confeſſing his ſinne, and then God forgave him the iniquitie thereof, and healed his body too. In ſickneſſe, or in any other trouble, It is beſt the Divine ſhould bee before the Phyſician: and that men begin where God begins. In great fires men looke firſt to their Jewels, and then to their lumber; ſo our ſoule is our beſt Jewell: A carnall worldly man, is called (and well called) a fleſhly man, becauſe his very ſoule is fleſh, and there is nothing but the world in him. And therefore, when all is not well within, he cries out, My *Body* is troubled, my *ſtate* is broken, my friends faile mee, &c. but all this while, there is no care for the poore ſoule to ſettle a peace in that. Cap. 6. Pſalm. 32.

The poſſeſſion of the ſoule is the richeſt poſſeſſion, no jewell ſo precious; the account for our owne ſoules, and

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and the ſoules of others, is the greateſt account, and therefore the care of ſoules ſhould bee the greateſt care: What an indignity is it that we ſhould forget ſuch ſoules to ſatisfie our luſts? to have our wills? to be vexed with any, who by their judgement, example, or authority ſtop as wee ſuppoſe our courſes. Is it not the greateſt plot of the world; Firſt, to have their luſts ſatisfied: Secondly, to remove either by fraud or violence whatſoever ſtandeth in their way: And thirdly, to put colours and pretences upon this to delude the world and themſelves, imploying all their carnall wit and worldly ſtrength for their carnall aimes, and fighting for that which fights againſt their owne ſoules? For what will bee the iſſue of this but certaine deſtruction?

Of this minde are not onely the dregs of people, but many of the more refined ſort, who deſire to be eminent in the world; And to have their owne deſires herein, give up the liberty of their owne judgements and conſcien-

ces,

ces, to the desires and lusts of others; *to be above others they will be beneath themselves*; having those mens persons in admiration for hope of advantage, whom otherwise they despise, and so substituting in their spirits, man in the place of GOD, lose heaven for earth, and bury that divine sparke (their soules) capable of the Divine nature, and fitter to be a sanctuary and temple for GOD to dwell in, than by clozing with baser things to become base it selfe. We need not wonder that others seeme base to carnall men, who are base both in and to themselves. It is no wonder they should bee cruell to the soules of others, who are cruell to their owne soules; that they should neglect and starve others, that give away their owne soules in a manner for nothing. Alas, upon what poore termes doe they hazard that, the nature and worth whereof is beyond mans reach to comprehend. Many are so careless in this kinde, that if they were throughly perswaded that they had soules that should live for ever, (either in blisse or torment) Cap. 6.

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torment) wee might the more easily work upon them. But as they live by sense, as beasts, so they have no more thoughts of future times than beasts, except at such times as conscience is awaked by some suddaine judgement, whereby Gods wrath is revealed from heaven against them. But happy were it for them, if they might die like beasts, whose miserie dies with them.

To such an estate hath sinne brought the soule, that it willingly drowneth it selfe in the senses, and becomes in some sort incarnate with the flesh.

Wee should therefore set our selves to have most care of that, which GOD cares most for: which hee breathed into us at first, set his owne image upon, gave so great a price for, & values above all the world besides. Shall all our study be to satisfie the desires of the flesh, and neglect this?

Is it not a vanity to preferre the casket before the jewell, the shell before the pearle, the gilded potsheard before the treasure? and is it not much more vanity, to preferre the outward condition

condition before the inward? The soule is that which Satan and his hath most spite at, for in troubling our bodies or estates, he aimes at the vexation of our soules. As in *Iob*, his aime was to abuse that power God had given him over His children, body and goods, to make him out of a disquieted spirit blaspheme God. It is an ill method to beginne our care in other things, and neglect the soule, as *Achitophel*, who set his house in order, when hee should have set his soule in order first. Wisedome begins at the right end. If all be well at home, it comforts a man, though he meets with troubles abroad. Oh (saith hee) I shall have rest at home, I have a loving wife and dutifull children; so whatsoever we meet withall abroad, if the soule be quiet, thither we can retire with comfort. See that all bee well within, and then all troubles from without cannot much annoy us.

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Job 1.

2 Sam. 17. 23. We should set the soul first in order.

Grace will teach us to reason thus, God hath given mine enemies power over my liberty and condition, but shall

Cap. 6. shall they have power and liberty over my spirit? It is that which Satan and they most seeke for: but never yeeld, Oh my soule. And thus a godly man will become more than a conquerer; when in appearance hee is conquered, the cause prevailes, his spirit prevailes and is undaunted. A Christian is not subdued till his spirit be subdued. Thus *Iob* prevailed over Sathan and all his troubles at length. This tormenteth proud persons to see godly men enjoy a calme and resolute frame of minde in the midst of troubles; when their enemies are more troubled in troubling them, than they are in being troubled by them.

Obser.7. Wee see likewise here, *how to frame our complaints: David* complaines not of God, nor of his troubles, nor of others, but of his owne soule; hee complaines of himselfe, to himselfe. As if hee should say, *Though all things else be out of order, yet O my soule thou shouldst not trouble mee too: thou shouldst not betray thy selfe unto troubles, but rule over them.* A godly man complaines to God, yet

yet not of God, but of himselfe; a carnall man is ready to justifie himselfe, and complaine of God. He complaines not to God, but of God (at the least) in secret murmuring: hee complaines of others that are but Gods vialls; hee complaines of the grievance that lies upon him, but never regards what is amisse in himselfe within: Openly hee cryes out upon fortune, yet secretly he striketh at God, under that Idoll of fortune, by whose guidance all things come to passe; whilst he quarrells with that which is nothing, hee wounds him that is the cause of all things: like a gouty man that complaines of his shooe, and of his bed; or an aguish man, of his drinke, when the cause is from within. So men are disquieted with others, when they should rather bee disquieted and angry with their owne hearts. Cap. 6.

We condemne *Ionas* for contending with God, and justifying his unjust anger, but yet the same risings are in men naturally, if shame would suffer them to give vent to their secret discontent;

Cap. 6. their heart ſpeakes what *Ionas* tongue ſpake. Oh, but here we ſhould lay our hand upon our mouth, and adore God, and command ſilence to our ſoules.

No man is hurt but by himſelfe firſt; Wee are drawne to evill, and allured from a true good to a falſe by our owne

Jam. 1. 13. luſts, *God tempts no man.* Satan hath no power over us further than wee willingly lie open to him; Satan workes upon our affections, and then our affections worke upon our will. Hee doth not worke immediately upon the will; wee may thanke our ſelves in willingly yeelding to our owne paſſions, for all that ill *Satan* or his inſtruments drawes

1 Sam. 16. us unto; *Saul* was not vexed with an *evill ſpirit*, till he gave way to his owne

Mat. 27. 3. *evill ſpirit of envy* firſt. The devill entred not into *Iudas*, untill his covetous heart made way for him. The Apoſtle ſtrengthneth his conceit againſt raſh and laſting anger from hence, that by

Ephes 4. this wee give way to the devill. It is a dangerous thing to paſſe from Gods government, and come under Satans.

Satan mingleth himſelfe with our owne

owne passions, therefore wee should blame our selves first, bee ashamed of our selves most, and judge our selves most severely. But selfe-love teacheth us a contrary method; to translate all upon others; it robs us of a right judgement of our selves. Though we desire to know all diseases of the body by their proper names, yet wee will conceive of sinfull passions of the soule under milder termes; as *lust* under *love*, *rage* under *just anger*, *murmuring* under *just displeasure*, *&c.* thus whilest wee flatter our griefe, what hope of cure? Thus sinne hath not onely made all the creatures enemies to us, but our selves the greatest enemies to our selves, and therefore wee should begin our complaints against our selves, & discusse our selves throughly; how else shal we judge truly of other things without us, above us, or beneath us? The Sun when it rises enlightens first the neerest places, and then the more remote; So where true light is set up, it discovers what is amisse within first. Cap. 6.

Hence also wee see, that *as in all dis-* Obser. 8.

Cap. 6. *couragements a godly man hath most trouble with his owne heart, so hee knowes how to carry himselfe therein,* as *David* doth here.

For the better clearing of this, wee must know there bee divers kindes and degrees of conflicts in the soule of man, whilst it is united to the body.

1. First, betweene one corrupt *Passion* and another, as betweene *Covetousnesse* and *Pride*; Pride calls for expence, Covetousnesse for restraint; oft *Passions* fight not onely against God and *reason*, to which they owe a homage, but one against another; Sinne fights against sinne, and a lesser sinne is oftentimes overcome by a greater. The soule in this case, is like the Sea tossed with contrary windes; and like a kingdome divided, wherein the subjects fight both against their Prince, and one against another.

2. Secondly, there is a naturall conflict in the *Affections*, whereby *Nature* seekes to preserve it selfe, as betwixt anger and feare; *Anger* cals for revenge, *Feare* of the law bindes the soule to be quiet.

Wee

Wee ſee in the creatures, *feare* makes them abſtaine from that which their appetites carry them unto. A *Wolfe* comes to a flock with an eagerneſſe to prey upon it, but ſeeing the *Shepheard* ſtanding in defence of his ſheepe, returnes and doth no harme, and yet for all this as hee came a wolfe, ſo hee returnes a wolfe. Cap. 6.

A naturall man may oppoſe ſome ſin from an obſtinate reſolution againſt it, not from any loue of God, or hatred of ſin, as *ſin*, but becauſe he conceives it a brave thing to have his will. As one hard weapon may ſtrike at another, as a ſtone wall may beate backe an arrow; but this oppoſition is not from a contrariety of nature, as is betwixt fire and water.

Thirdly, there is a conflict of a higher nature, as between ſome *ſinnes* and the light of *reaſon* helped by a naturall conſcience. The *Heathen* could reaſon from the dignity of the ſoule, to count it a baſe thing to proſtitute themſelves to beaſtly luſts, ſo as it were degrading and unmanning themſelves. Naturall 3.

Major ſum, & ad majora natus, quã ut corporis mei ſim mancipium. Senec.

Cap. 6. men desirous to maintaine a great opinion of themselves, and to awe the inferiour sort by gravity of deportment in carriage, will abstaine from that, which otherwise their hearts carry them unto, lest yeelding should render them despised, by laying themselves too much open; as because passion discovers a foole as hee is, and makes a wise man thought meaner then hee is; therefore a prudent man will conceale his passion. Reason refined and raised by education, example, and custome, doth breake in some degree the force of naturall corruption, and brings into the soule, as it were, another nature, and yet no true change; as wee see in such as have beene inured to good courses, they feele conscience checking them upon the first discontinuance and alteration of their former good wayes, but this is usually from a former impression of their breeding, as the boate moves some little time upon the water by vertue of the former stroke, yet at length we see corruption prevailing over education, as in *Ioas*, who was

was awed by the reverent respect hee bare to his uncle *Iehojoda*, hee was good *all his uncles dayes:* And in *Nero*, in whom the goodnesse of his *education* prevailed over the fiercenesse of his *nature*, for the first five yeares. Cap. 6. 2 Kings 12.2.

Fourthly, but in the Church, where there shineth a light above nature, as there is a discovery of more sinnes, and some strength, with the light, to performe more duty; So there is a further conflict than in a man that hath no better than *nature* in him. By a discovery of the excellent things of the *Gospell*, there may be some kinde of joy stirred up, and some degree of obedience: whence there may be some degree of resistance against the sinnes of the *Gospell*, as obstinate unbeleefe, desperation, prophanenesse, &c. A man in the Church may doe more than another out of the Church, by reason of the inlargement of his knowledge; whereupon such cannot sinne at so easie a rate as others that know lesse, and (therefore) meet with lesse opposition from conscience. 4.

Cap. 6. 5.

Fiftly, there is yet a further degree of conflict betwixt the ſanctified powers of the ſoule, and the fleſh, not onely as it is ſeated in the baſer parts, but even in the beſt faculties of the ſoule, and as it mingles it ſelf with every gracious performance; (as in *David*) There is not onely a conflict betwixt ſinne and conſcience, inlightned by a *common worke* of the *Spirit*; but betweene the commanding powers of the ſoule *ſanctified*, and it ſelfe *unſanctified*, between reaſons of the *fleſh* and reaſons of the *ſpirit*, betweene *faith* and *diſtruſt*, betweene the true light of knowledge, and falſe light. For it is no queſtion but the fleſh would play its part in *David*, and muſter up all the ſtrength of reaſon it had. And uſually *fleſh*, as it is more ancient then the *Spirit*, (wee being firſt naturall then ſpirituall) ſo it will put it ſelfe firſt forward in deviſing ſhifts, as *Eſau* comes out of the wombe firſt before *Iacob*; yet hereby the *Spirit* is ſtirred up to a preſent examination and reſiſtance, and in reſiſting (as wee ſee here) at length the godly gets the victory.

victory. As in the conflict betweene the higher parts of the soule with the lower, it clearely appeares, that the soule doth not rise out of the temper of the body, but is a more noble substance, commanding the body by reasons fetched from its owne worth; so in this spirituall conflict, it appeares there is something better than the soule it selfe, that hath superiority over it. Cap. 7.

CAP. VII.

Difference betweene good men and others in conflicts with sinne.

BUt how doth it appeare that this combate in *David* was a *spirituall* combate? *Quest.*

First, a naturall conscience is troubled for sins against the light of *nature* onely, but *David* for inward and secret corruptions, as discouragement and disquietnesse arising from faint trusting in God. 1. *Answ.*

Davids conflict was not onely with the sensuall lower part of his soule, which

Cap. 7. which is carryed to eaſe and quiet, and love of preſent things, but hee was troubled with a mutiny in his underſtanding, betweene *faith* and *diſtruſt*; and therefore hee was forced to rouze up his ſoule ſo oft to *truſt* in *God*, which ſhews that carnall reaſon did ſolicite him to diſcontent, and had many colourable reaſons for it.

2. Secondly, a man indued with *common* grace, is rather a patient than an agent in conflicts; the *light* troubles him againſt his will, as diſcovering and reproving him, and hindring his ſinfull contentments; his heart is more byaſed another way if the *light* would let him; but a godly man labours to helpe the *light*, and to worke his heart to an oppoſition againſt ſinne; he is an agent as well as a patient. As *David* here doth not ſuffer diſquieting, but is *diſquieted* with himſelfe for being ſo. A godly man is an *agent* in oppoſing his corruption, and a *patient* in induring of it: whereas a naturall man is a ſecret *agent* in and for his corruptions, and a *patient* in regard of any helpe againſt them;

them; A good man ſuffers evill and doth good, a naturall man ſuffers good and doth evill. Cap. 7.

Thirdly, A conſcience guided by *common* light, withſtands diſtempers moſt by outward meanes, but *David* here ſercheth helpe from the Spirit of *God* in him, and from truſt in *God*. Nature works from within, ſo doth the new nature; *David* is not onely ſomething *diſquieted*, and ſomething troubled for being diſquieted, but ſets himſelfe throughly againſt his diſtempers; hee complaines, and expoſtulates, hee cenſures, and chargeth his ſoule. The other, if hee doth any thing at all, yet it is faintly; he ſeeks out his corruption as a coward doth his enemie, loth to finde him, and more loth to encounter with him. 3.

Fourthly, *David* withſtands ſinne *conſtantly*, and gets ground. We ſee here, hee gives not over at the firſt, but preſſeth againe and againe. Nature works conſtantly, ſo doth the new nature. The conflict in the other is ſomething forced, as taking part with the worſer 4.

Cap. 7. worser side in himself, good things have a weake, or rather no party in him, bad things a strong; and therefore he soone gives over in this holy quarrell.

5. Fiftly, *David* is not discouraged by his foiles, but sets himselfe afresh against his corruptions, with confidence to bring them under. Whereas he that hath but a common worke of the Spirit, after some foiles, lets his enemy prevaile more and more, and so despaires of victory, and thinkes it better to sit still, than to rise and take a new fall; by which meanes his later end is worse then his beginning; for *beginning in the Spirit, he ends in the flesh.* A godly man, although upon some foile, hee may for a time be discouraged, yet by holy indignation against sinne, hee renues his force, and sets afresh upon his corruptions, and gathers more strength by his falls, and groweth into more acquaintance with his own *heart*, and Satans malice, and Gods strange waies in bringing light out of darkenesse.

6. Sixtly, An ordinary Christian may be disquieted for being disquieted, as

David

David was, but then it is onely as disquiet hath vexation in it; but *David* here striveth against the unquietnesse of his spirit, not only as it brought vexation with it, but as it hindred communion with his God. Cap. 7.

In sinne there is not onely a *guilt* binding over the soule to Gods judgement, and thereupon filling the soule with inward feares and terrors; but in sinne likewise there is, 1. a contrariety to *Gods* holy nature; and, 2. a contrariety to the Divine nature and image stamped upon our selves; 3. a weakning and disabling of the soule from good; and, 4. a hindring of our former communion with GOD, sinne being in its nature a leaving of God the fountaine of all strength and comfort, and cleaving to the creature; hereupon the soule having tasted the sweetnesse of GOD before, is now grieved, and this grief is not onely for the guilt and trouble that sinne drawes after it, but from an inward Antipathy and contrariety betwixt the sanctified soule and sinne. It hates sinne as sinne, as the onely

Evils of sinne.
1.
2.
3.
4.

Cap. 7. onely bane and poyſon of renewed nature, and the onely thing that breeds ſtrangeneſſe betwixt God and the ſoul. And this hatred, is not ſo much from diſcourſe and ſtrength of reaſon, as from nature it ſelfe riſing preſently againſt its enemie; The *Lambe* preſently ſhuns the *Wolfe* from a contrariety; Antipathies wait not for any ſtrong reaſon, but are exerciſed upon the firſt preſence of a contrary object.

7. Seventhly, hereupon ariſeth the laſt difference; that becauſe the ſoule hateth ſinne as ſinne, therefore it oppoſeth it univerſally and eternally, in all the powers of the ſoule, and in all actions inward and outward iſſuing from

Pſal. 66. 18 thoſe powers, *David regarded no iniquity in his heart, but hated every evill way.* The deſires of his ſoule were, *that*

Pſal. 119. 5 *it might be ſo directed, that he might keepe Gods law.* And if there had beene no binding law, yet there was ſuch a ſweet ſympathy and agreement betwixt his ſoule and Gods truth, that he *delighted in it* above all naturall *ſweetneſſe*; Hence

1 Ioh. 3. 9. it is that Saint *Iohn* ſaith, *He that is borne of*

of God cannot sinne, that is, so far forth as he is *borne of God*; his *new* nature will not suffer him, he cannot lie, he cannot deceive, he cannot be earthly minded, hee cannot but love and delight in the persons and things that are good. There is not onely a light in the understanding, but a new life in the will, and all other faculties of a godly man; what good his knowledge discovereth, that his will makes choice of, and his heart loveth; What ill his understanding discovers, that his will hateth and abstains from. But in a man not throughly converted, the will and affections are bent otherwise, hee loves not the good he doth, nor hates the evill hee doth not. Cap. 7.

Therefore let us make a narrow search into our soules upon what grounds wee oppose sinne, and fight *Gods* battells. A common Christian is not cast downe, because he is disquieted in Gods service, or for his inward failings, that he cannot serve God with that liberty & freedome he desires, &c. But a godly man is troubled for his distempers, *Vse.*

Cap. 7. ſtempers, becauſe they hinder the comfortable intercourſe betwixt God and his ſoule, and that ſpirituall compoſednesſe, and Sabbath of ſpirit which hee enjoyed before, and deſires to enjoy againe. Hee is troubled that the waters of his ſoule are troubled ſo, that the image of Chriſt ſhines not in him as it did before. It grieves him to finde an abatement in affection, in love to God, a diſtraction or coldneſſe in performing duties, any doubting of Gods favour, any diſcouragement from dutie, &c. A godly mans comforts and grievances are hid from the world; naturall men are ſtrangers to them. Let this be a rule of diſcerning our eſtates, how wee ſtand affected to the diſtempers of our hearts; If wee finde them troubleſome, it is a ground of comfort unto us that our *Spirits* are ruled by a *higher Spirit*; and that there is a principle of that life in us, which cannot brooke the moſt ſecret corruption, but rather caſts it out by a holy complaint, as ſtrength of nature doth poyſon, which ſeekes its deſtruction. And let

let us bee in love with that worke of grace in us, which makes us out of love with the leaſt ſtirrings that hinder our beſt condition. Cap. 7.

See againe, *Wee may be ſinfully diſquieted for that which is not a ſinne to be diſquieted for.* *David* had ſinned if he had not beene ſomewhat troubled for the baniſhment from Gods houſe, and the blaſphemie of the enemies of the Church; But yet (wee ſee) hee ſtops himſelfe, and ſharply takes up his ſoule for being diſquieted: Hee did well in being diſquieted, and in checking himſelfe for the ſame; there were good grounds for both: He had wanted ſpirituall life if he had not beene diſquieted. Hee abated the vigour and liveline ſſe of his life, by being over-much diſquieted. Obſer. 9.

Cap. 8.

Cap. VIII.

Of unfitting dejection: and when it is exceſsive. And what is the right temper of the ſoule herein.

§. 1.

Queſt. *THen, how ſhall we know when a man is caſt downe and diſquieted, otherwiſe then is befitting?*

Anſw. There is a three-fold miſcarriage of inward trouble.

1. 1. *When the ſoule is troubled for that it ſhould not be vexed for*, as *Ahab*, when hee was croſt in his will for *Naboths* vineyard.

2. 2. *In the ground*, as when we grieve for that which is good, and for that which we ſhould grieve for; but it is with too much reflecting upon our own particular.

As in the troubles of the *State* or *Church*, wee ought to be affected; but not becauſe theſe troubles hinder any liberties of the fleſh, and reſtrain pride of life, but from higher reſpects: As that

that by these troubles *God* is dishonoured, the publike exercises of Religion hindred, and the gathering of soules thereby stopped: As, the *States* and *Common-wealths* which should be harbours of the Church, are disturbed; as lawlesse courses and persons prevaile; as Religion and Justice is triumphed over, and trodden under. Men usually are grieved for publique miseries from a spirit of selfe-love onely, because their owne private is imbarqued in the publique. There is a depth of deceit of the heart in this matter. Cap. 8.

3. So for the measure, when wee trouble our selves (though not without cause) yet without bounds. 3.

The spirit of man is like unto moist elements, as ayre and water, which have no bounds of their owne to containe them in, but those of the vessell that keepes them: water is spilt and lost without something to hold it; so it is with the spirit of man, unlesse it be bounded with the Spirit of God. Put the case a man be disquieted for sinne, (for which not to be disquieted is a sin)

Cap. 8. yet we may looke too much, and too long upon it, for the soule hath a double eye, one to looke to sinne, another to looke up to Gods mercy in Christ. Having two objects to looke on, wee may sinne in looking too much on the one, with neglect of the other.

§. 2.

Quest. *Seeing then, disquieting and dejection for sinne is necessary, how shall we know when it exceeds measure?*

Answ. 1. First, *when it hinders us from holy duties, or in the performance of them,* by distraction or otherwise; whereas they are given to carry us to that which is pleasing to GOD, and good to our selves.

Griefe is ill when it taketh off the soule from minding that it should, and so indisposeth us to the duties of our callings. Christ upon the Crosse was grieved to the utmost, yet it did not take away his care for his mother; so the *good thiefe* in the middest of his pangs laboured to gaine his fellow, and to save his owne soule, and to glorifie Christ. If this be so in griefe of body

Luk. 23. 42

which

which taketh away the free use of reason, and exercise of grace more than any other griefe, then much more in griefe from more remote causes, for in extremity of body the sicknesse may be such, as all that wee can performe to God is a quiet submission, and a desire to bee carried unto Christ by the prayers of others; we should so minde our griefe as not to forget Gods mercy, or our owne duty. Cap. 8.

Secondly, when wee forget the grounds of comfort, & suffer our minde to runne onely upon the present grievance, it is a sinne to dwell on sinne, and turmoile our thoughts about it, when we are called to thankfulnesse. A Physitian in good discretion forbids a dish at some times to prevent the nourishment of some disease, which another time he gives way unto. So wee may and ought to abstaine from too much feeding our thoughts upon our corruptions in case of discouragement, which at other times is very necessary. It should be our wisedome in such cases to change the object, and labour to take 2.

Cap. 8. off our mindes, and give them to that which calls more for them; Griefe oft preſſeth unſeaſonably upon us, when there is cauſe of joy, and when we are called to joy; as *Ioab* juſtly found fault with *David* for grieving too much, when GOD had given him the victory, and rid him and the State of a traiterous ſonne. GOD hath made ſome dayes for joy, and joy is the proper worke of thoſe dayes. *This is the day which the Lord hath made.* Some in a ſicke diſtemper, deſire that which increaſeth their ſickneſſe; ſo ſome that are deepely caſt downe, deſire a wakening miniſtery, and what ever may caſt them downe more; whereas they ſhould meditate upon comforts, and get ſome ſweet aſſurance of Gods love. Joy is the conſtant temper which the ſoule ſhould be in, *Rejoyce evermore*, (ſaith the Apoſtle.) If a ſinke bee ſtirred, we ſtir it not more, but goe into a ſweeter roome. So wee ſhould thinke of that which is comfortable, and of ſuch truths as may raiſe up the ſoule, and ſweeten the ſpirit.

Pſ. 118. 24.

1 Theſſ. 5. 16.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Griefe is too much, when it inclines the ſoule to any inconvenient courſes: (for if it bee not lookt to, it is an ill counſeller) when either it hurts the health of our bodies, or drawes the ſoule (for to eaſe it ſelfe) to ſome unlawfull liberty. When grief keeps ſuch a noiſe in the ſoule, that it will not heare what the meſſengers of God, or the ſtill voice of the Spirit ſaith, as in combuſtions, loud cries are ſcarce heard: ſo in ſuch caſes the ſoule will neither heare it ſelfe, nor others. The fruit of this overmuch trouble of ſpirit, is increaſe of trouble. Cap. 8. 3.

§. 3.

3. Another queſtion may be, *What that ſweet and holy temper is, the ſoule ſhould be in, that it may neither be faulty in the defect, nor too much abound in griefe and ſorow?* *Queſt.*

1. The ſoule muſt bee raiſed to a right griefe. *Anſw.*

2. The griefe that is raiſed, though it bee right, yet it muſt bee bounded. Before wee ſpeake of raiſing griefe in

Cap. 8. the godly, wee must know there are some who are altogether strangers to any kinde of spirituall griefe, or trouble at all; such must consider, that the way to prevent everlasting trouble, is to desire to be troubled with a preventing trouble. Let those that are not in the way of grace thinke with themselves what cause they have, not to take a minutes rest while they are in that estate. For a man to bee in debt both body and soule, subject every minute to be arrested and caried prisoner to Hell, and not to bee moved: For a man to have the wrath of God ready to bee powred out upon him, and Hell gape for him, nay to carry a hell about him in conscience (if it were awake) and to have all his comfort here hanging upon a weake threed of this life ready to bee cut and broken off every moment, and to be cursed in all those blessings that hee enjoyes: and yet not to be disquieted, but continually treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, by running deeper into Gods books: for a man to bee thus, and not

to

to bee disquieted, is but the Devills peace, whilest the strong man holds possession: *A burning Ague is more hopefull than a Lethargy:* The best service that can be done to such men, is to startle and rouze them, and so with violence to pull them out of the fire, (as *Iude* speakes) or else they will another day curse that cruell mercy that lets them alone now. In all their jollity in this world, they are but as a Booke fairely bound, which when it is opened is full of nothing but Tragedies. So when the booke of their consciences shall be once opened, there is nothing to be read but lamentations and woes. Such men were in a way of hope, if they had but so much apprehension of their estates, as to ask themselves, *What have I done?* If this bee true that there are such fearefull things prepared for sinners, *why* am I not *cast downe?* Why am I no more troubled and discouraged for my wicked courses? Despaire to such is the beginning of comfort; and trouble the beginning of peace. A storme is the way to a calme, and hell the

Cap. 8.

Jude 23.

Cap. 8.

1. Right griefe, how raised.

the way to heaven.

But for raising of a right grief in the soule of a holy man, *look what is the state of the soule in it selfe, in what termes it is with God*; whether there be any sinne hanging on the syle unrepented of. If all be not well within us, then heres place for inward trouble, whereby the soule may afflict it selfe.

Lev. 16. 29.

God saw this griefe so needfull for his people, that he appointed certaine dayes for afflicting them; because it is fit that sinne contracted by joy should bee dissolved by griefe; and sinne is so deepely invested into the soule, that a separation betwixt the soule and it cannot be wrought without much griefe; when the soule hath smarted for sinne, it sets then the right price upon reconciliation with God in Christ, and it feeleth what a bitter thing sinne is, and therefore it will be afraid to be too bold with it afterward; it likewise aweth the heart so, that it will not be so loose towards GOD as it was before; and certainely that soule that hath felt the sweetnesse of keeping peace with God,

God, cannot but take deeply to heart, that there ſhould bee any thing in us that ſhould divide betwixt us and the fountaine of our comfort, that ſhould ſtop the paſſage of our prayers, and the current of Gods favours both towards our ſelves and others; it is ſuch an ill as is the cauſe of all other ill, and damps all our comforts. Cap. 8.

2. We ſhould looke out of our ſelves alſo, conſidering whether for troubles at home and abroad, God calls not to mourning or troubling of our ſelves; griefe of compaſſion is as well required as griefe of contrition. 2.

It is a dead member that is not ſenſible of the ſtate of the body. *Ieremie* for feare he ſhould not weepe enough for the diſtreſſed eſtate of the Church, deſired of God, *that his eyes might be made a fountaine of teares.* A Chriſtian, as hee muſt not be proud fleſh, ſo neither muſt he be dead fleſh; none more truely ſenſible either of ſinne or of miſery (ſo farre as miſery carries with it any ſigne of Gods diſpleaſure) then a true Chriſtian: which iſſues from the life Ierem. 9. 1.

Cap. 8.

life of Grace, which (where it is in any measure) is lively, and therefore sensible: for God gives motion and senses for the preservation of life. As Gods bowels are tender towards us, so Gods people have tender bowels towards *him*, his *cause*, his *people*, and his *Church*. The fruit of this sensibleness, is earnest prayer to God. (As *Melanchon* said well) *If I cared for nothing, I would pray for nothing.*

Si nil curarem, nil orarem.

2. Griefe being thus raised, must, as wee said before, bee bounded and guided.

2. Griefe to be bounded.

1. God hath framed the soule, and planted such affections in it, as may answer all his dealing towards his children; that when he enlargeth himselfe towards them, then the soule should enlarge it selfe to him againe; when he opens his hand wee ought to open our hearts; when hee shewes any token of displeasure, we should grieve; when he troubles us, wee should trouble and grieve our selves. As GOD any way discovereth himself, so the soule should be in a sutable pliableness. Then the soule

1. When our affections are pliable.

soule is as it should bee when it is ready to meet God at every turn, to joy when he calls for it, to mourne when he calls for that, to labour to know Gods meaning in every thing. Cap. 8.

Againe, GOD hath made the soule for a communion with himselfe, which communion is especially placed in the affections, which are the springs of all spirituall worship. Then the affections are well ordered, when wee are fit to have communion with God, to *love*, *joy*, *trust*, to *delight* in him above all things. The affections are the inward movings of the soule, which then move best when they move us to God, not from him. They are the feet of the soule, whereby wee walke with, and before God. When we have our affections at such command, that we can take them off from any thing in the world, at such times as wee are to have more neare communion with GOD in *hearing* or *prayer*, &c. As *Abraham* when he was to sacrifice, left whatsoever might hinder him at the *bottome of the Mount*, When we let our affections so farre in- Gen. 22. 5.

2. Whē fit to have communion with God.

to

Cap. 8.

to the things of the world, as we cannot take them off when wee are to deale with God; it is a signe of spirituall intemperancie. It is said of the Israelites that they brought Ægypt with them into the wildernesse; so many bring the world in their hearts with them, when they come before God.

3. When our affections are subordinate.

But because our affections are never well ordered without judgement, as being to follow, not to leade; It is an evidence that the soule is in a fit temper, when there is such a harmony in it, as that wee judge of things as they are, and affect as we judge, and execute as wee affect. This harmony within breeds uniformity and constancy in our resolutions, so that there is (as it were) an even thred drawne through the whole course and tenour of our lives, when wee are not off and on, up and downe. It argues an ill state of body when it is very hot, or very cold, or hot in one part, and cold in another; so unevennesse of spirit argues a distemper; a wise mans life is of one colour like it selfe. The soule bred from heaven,

heaven, ſo farre as it is heavenly minded, deſires to be (like heaven) above all ſtormes, uniforme, conſtant; not as things under the Sunne, which are alwayes in changes, conſtant onely in inconſtancy. Affections are as it were the winde of the ſoule, and then the ſoule is carried as it ſhould be, when it is neither ſo becalmed that it moves not when it ſhould, nor yet toſſed with tempeſts to move diſorderly. When it is ſo well balaced that it is neither lift up, nor caſt down too much, but keepeth a ſteddy courſe. Our affections muſt not riſe to become unruly paſſions, for then as a river that overfloweth the bankes, they carry much ſlime and ſoile with them. Though affections be the winde of the ſoule, yet unruly paſſions are the ſtormes of the ſoule, and will overturne all, if they be not ſuppreſſed. The beſt (as wee ſee in *David* here) if they doe not ſteare their hearts aright, are in danger of ſudden guſts. A Chriſtian muſt neither be a dead ſea, nor a raging ſea. Cap. 8.

Our affections are then in beſt temper, 4.

Cap. 8. When our affections become graces.

per, when they become ſo many graces of the Spirit; as when *love* is turned to a love of God; *joy*, to a delight in the beſt things; *feare*, to a feare of offending him more than any creature; *ſorrow*, to a ſorrow for ſinne, &c.

5. When fit to perform duties.

They are likewiſe in good temper, when they move us to all duties of love and mercy towards others; when they are not ſhut, where they ſhould be open, nor open where they ſhould be ſhut.

In caſe of Gods diſhonour, exceeding affection is no exceſſe.

Yet there is one caſe wherein exceeding *affection* is not over exceeding; As in an extaſie of zeale upon a ſudden apprehenſion of Gods diſhonour, and his cauſe trodden under foot. It is better in this caſe, rather ſcarce to be our owne men, than to be calme or quiet. It is ſaid of *Chriſt* and *David*, that their hearts were eaten up with a holy zeale for GODS houſe. In ſuch a caſe *Moſes* unparalleld for *meekneſſe*, was turned into an holy rage. The greatneſſe of the provocation, the excellencie of the object, and the weight of the occaſion, beares out the ſoule, not onely without blame,

blame, but with great praiſe, in ſuch ſeeming diſtempers. It is the glory of a Chriſtian to be carried with full ſaile, and as it were with a ſpring-tide of affection. So long as the ſtreame of affection runneth in the due channell, and if there bee great occaſions for great motions, then it is fit the affections ſhould riſe higher, as to *burne* with zeale, to be *ſick of love*, to be *more vile* for the Lord, as *David*; to be counted *out of our wits* with Saint *Paul* to further the cauſe of Chriſt and the good of ſoules. Cap. 8. Cant. 2. 5. 1 Sam. 6. 22

Thus we may ſee the life of a poore Chriſtian in this world, 1. he is in great danger if hee bee not troubled at all. 2. When he is troubled, he is in danger to be over-troubled. 3. When he hath brought his ſoule in tune againe, hee is ſubject to new troubles. Betwixt this ebbing and flowing there is very little quiet. Now becauſe this cannot bee done without a great meaſure of Gods Spirit, our helpe is to make uſe of that promiſe of giving *the holy Ghoſt to them that aske it*. To teach us *when*, how The life of a Chriſtian is a life of trouble. Ioh. 11. 13.

Cap. 9. *long*, and how *much* to grieve: and *when*, and how *long*, and how *much* to rejoyce; the Spirit must teach the heart this, who as he moved upon the waters before the Creation, so hee must move upon the waters of our soules, for wee have not the command of our owne hearts. Every naturall man is carryed away with his flesh and humours, upon which the devill rides, and carries him whither he list; he hath no better counsellors than flesh and bloud, and Sathan counselling with them. But a godly man is not a slave to his carnall affections, but (as *David* here) labours to bring into captivity the first motions of sinne in his heart.

Cap. IX.

Of the soules disquiets, Gods dealings, and power to containe our selves in order.

Obser. 1. MOreover wee see, that *the soule hath disquiets proper to it selfe, besides those griefes of Sympathy that arise from the bodie*; for here the soule complaines of the

the soule it selfe, as when it is out of the body it hath torments and joyes of its owne. And if these troubles of the soule be not well cured, then by way of fellowship and redundance they will affect the outward man, and so the whole man shall bee inwrapt in miserie. Cap. 9.

From whence wee further see, that *God, when hee will humble a man, needs not fetch forces from without*, if hee let but our owne hearts loose, wee shall have trouble and worke enough, though we were as holy as *David*, GOD did not onely exercise him with a rebellious sonne out of his owne loynes, but with rebellious risings out of his owne heart. If there were no enemie in the world, nor devill in hell, we carry that within us, that if it be let loose, will trouble us more than all the world besides. Oh that the proud creature should exalt himselfe against God, and runne into a voluntary course of provoking him, who cannot onely raise the humours of our bodies against us, but the passions of our mindes also to torment us! *Obser.* 2.

Cap. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 22. Therefore it is the beſt wiſedome not to provoke the great God, for *are wee ſtronger than hee*, that can raiſe our ſelves againſt our ſelves? and worke wonders not onely in the great world, but alſo in the little world, our ſoules and bodies when he pleaſes?

Obſer. 3. Wee ſee likewiſe hence a *neceſſity of having ſomething in the ſoule above it ſelfe, it muſt be partaker of a diviner nature than it ſelfe*; otherwiſe, when the moſt refined part of our ſoules, the very ſpirit of our mindes is out of frame, what ſhall bring it in againe? Therefore we muſt conceive in a godly man, a double ſelfe, one which muſt be denied, the other which muſt denie; one that breeds all the diſquiet, and another that ſtilleth what the other hath raiſed. The way to ſtill the ſoule, as it is under our corrupt ſelfe, is not to parlee with it, and divide government for peace ſake, as if wee ſhould gratifie the fleſh in ſomething, to redeeme liberty to the ſpirit in other things; for we ſhall finde the fleſh will be too encrocching. Wee muſt ſtrive againſt it, not

not with ſubtilty and diſcourſe, ſo much, as with peremptory violence ſilence it and vexe it: An enemy that parlees will yeeld at length. Grace is nothing elſe but that bleſſed power, whereby as ſpirituall, wee gaine upon our ſelves as carnall. Holy *love* is that which wee gaine of ſelfe-love; and ſo *joy*, and *delight*, *&c.* Grace labours to winne ground of the old man, untill at length it be all in all; Indeed wee are never our ſelves perfectly, till we have wholly put off our ſelves. Nothing ſhould bee at a greater diſtance to us, than our ſelves. This is the reaſon why carnall men that have nothing above themſelves but their *corrupt ſelfe*, ſinke in great troubles, having nothing within to uphold them, whereas a good man is wiſer than *himſelfe*, holier than himſelfe, ſtronger than himſelfe, there is ſomething in him more than a man. There be evills that the ſpirit of man alone out of the goodneſſe of nature cannot beare, but the ſpirit of man aſſiſted with an higher ſpirit, will ſupport and carry him through. It is a good Cap. 9.

Cap. 9. triall of a mans condition to know what he esteems to be *himselfe*. A godly man counts the inner man, the sanctified part, to be himselfe, whereby hee stands in relation to Christ and a better life. Another man esteemes his contentment in the world, the satisfaction of his carnall desires, the respect hee findes from men by reason of his parts, or something without him, that he is master of, this he counts *himselfe*, and by this hee values himselfe, and to this he makes his best thoughts and endevours serviceable; And of crosses in these things he is most sensible, and so sensible, that he thinks himselfe undone if he seeth not a present issue out of them.

That which most troubles a good man in all troubles, is *himselfe*, so farre as he is unsubdued; he is more disquieted with *himselfe*, than with all troubles out of *himselfe*; when hee hath gotten the better once of *himselfe*, whatsoever falls from without, is light; where the Spirit is enlarged, it cares not much for outward bondage; where the

the ſpirit is lightſome, it cares not much for outward darkneſſe; where the ſpirit is ſetled, it cares not much for outward changes; where the ſpirit is one with it ſelfe, it can beare outward breaches; where the ſpirit is ſound, it can beare outward ſickneſſe. Nothing can be very ill with us, when all is well within. This is the comfort of a holy man, that though hee bee troubled with himſelfe, yet by reaſon of the ſpirit in him which is his *better ſelfe*, hee workes out by degrees, what ever is contrary. As Spring-water being cleere of it ſelfe, workes it ſelfe cleane, though it be troubled by ſomething caſt in; as the Sea will endure no poyſonfull thing, but caſts it upon the ſhore. But a carnall man is like a Spring corrupted, that cannot worke it ſelfe cleare, becauſe it is wholly tainted, his eye and light is darkneſſe, and therefore no wonder if he ſeeth nothing. Sin lieth upon his underſtanding, and hinders the knowledge of it ſelfe; it lies cloſe upon the will, and hinders the ſtriving againſt it ſelfe. Cap. 9.

Cap. 9.

True *selfe* that is worth the owning, is when a man is taken into a higher condition, and made one with Christ, and esteemes neither of himselfe nor others, as happy for any thing according to the flesh. 1. Hee is under the law and government of the Spirit, and so farre as hee is himselfe, works according to that principle. 2. Hee labours more and more to be transformed into the likenesse of Christ, in whom hee esteemeth that hee hath his best being. 3. Hee esteemes of all things that befall him, to be good or ill, as they further or hinder his best condition. If all be well for that, he counts himselfe well, whatsoever else befals him.

Another man when hee doth any thing that is good, acts not his owne part; but a godly man when hee doth good, is in his proper element; what another man doth for by-ends and reasons, that *hee* doth from a new nature; which if there were no Law to compell, yet would move him to that which is pleasing to Christ. If hee be drawne aside by passion or temptation,

on, *that* hee judgeth not to bee himselfe, but taketh a holy revenge on himselfe for it, as being redeemed and taken out from himselfe; hee thinkes himselfe no *debtor*, nor to owe any service to his corrupt selfe. That which he plots and projects and workes for is, that Christ may rule every where, and especially in himselfe, for hee is not his owne but Christs, and therefore desires to bee more and more emptied of himselfe, that Christ might be *all in all* in him. Cap. 9.

Thus we see, what great use there is of dealing with our selves, for the better composing and setling of our soules. Which though it bee a course without glory and ostentation in the world, as causing a man to retire inwardly into his owne breast, having no other witnesse but God and himself; and though it bee likewise irksome to the flesh, as calling the soule home to it selfe, being desirous naturally to wander abroad, and be a stranger at home: Yet it is a course both good in it selfe, and makes the soule good.

For

Cap. 9.

For by this meanes the *judgement* is exercised and rectified, the *will* and *affections* ordered, the whole man *put* into an holy frame fit for every good action. By this the *tree* is made good, and the fruit cannot but be answerable; by this the soule it selfe is set in tune, whence there is a pleasant harmony in our whole conversation. Without this, wee may doe that which is outwardly good to others, but wee can never bee good our selves. The first justice begins within, when there is a due subjection of all the powers of the soule to the spirit, as sanctified and guided by Gods Spirit; when justice and order is first established in the soule, it will appeare from thence in all our dealings. He that is at peace in himselfe, will be peaceable to others, peaceable in his family, peaceable in the Church, peaceable in the State; The soule of a wicked man is in perpetuall sedition; being alwayes troubled in it selfe, it is no wonder if it be troublesome to others. Unity in our selves is before union with others.

Vnitas sui ante unionem.

To

Cap. 9.

To conclude this first part, concerning intercourse with our selves. As wee desire to enjoy our selves, and to live the life of men, and of Christians, which is, to understand our wayes: as we desire to live comfortably, and not to be accessary of yeelding to that sorrow which causeth death: As wee desire to answere GOD and our selves, when we are to give an account of the inward tumults of our soules: As wee desire to be vessels prepared for every good worke, and to have strength to undergoe any crosse: As we desire to have healthy soules, and to keep a *Sabbath* within our selves: As wee desire not onely to doe good, but to be good in our selves: So let us labour to quiet our soules, and often aske a reason of our selves, *Why we should not be quiet?*

CAP.

Cap. 10.

Cap. X.

Meanes not to be overcharged with sorrow.

TO helpe us further herein, besides that which hath beene formerly spoken,

1. Changes must be forethought of

1. Wee must take heed of building an ungrounded confidence of happinesse for time to come: which makes us when changes come, 1. Unacquainted with them; 2. takes away expectation of them; 3. and preparation for them. When any thing is strange and sudden, and lights upon us unfurnished and unfenced, it must needs put our spirits out of frame. It is good therefore to make all kinde of troubles familiar to us, in our thoughts at least, and this will breake the force of them. It is good to fence our soules beforehand against all assaults, as men use to keepe out the Sea, by raising bankes; and if a breach bee made, to repaire it presently.

We

Wee had need to maintaine a ſtrong Garriſon of holy Reaſons againſt the aſſaults of ſtrong paſſions; wee may hope for the beſt, but feare the worſt, and prepare to beare whatſoever. We ſay that a ſet dyet is dangerous, becauſe variety of occaſions will force us upon breaking of it: So in this world of changes, wee cannot reſolve upon any certaine condition of life, for upon alteration the minde is out of frame. We cannot ſay this or that trouble ſhall not befall, yet we may by helpe of the Spirit, ſay, nothing that doth befall, ſhall make mee doe that which is unworthy of a Chriſtian. Cap. 10.

That which others make eaſie by ſuffering, that a wiſe man maketh eaſie by thinking of beforehand. If we expect the worſt, when it comes, it is no more than wee thought of. If better befalls us, then it is the ſweeter to us, the leſſe wee expected it. Our *Saviour* foretels the worſt: *In the world you ſhall have tribulation*, therefore looke for it, but then hee will not leave us. Satan deludes with many promiſes: but when *Quæ alii diu patiendo levia faciũt, ſapiens levia facit diu cogitando.* Ioh. 16. 33.

Cap. 10. when the contrary falls out, hee leaves his followers in their diſtreſſes. Wee deſire peace and reſt, but wee ſeeke it not in its owne place; Heb. 4. 9. *There is a reſt for Gods people*, but that is not here, nor yet; but it remaines for them; *they reſt from their labours*, but that is after they are Rev. 14. 13. *dead in the Lord.* There is no ſound reſt Caution. till then. Yet this caution muſt be remembred, that wee ſhape not in our fancies ſuch troubles as are never likely to fall out. It comes either from weakneſſe or guiltineſſe, to feare ſhadowes. We ſhall not need to make croſſes, they will (as we ſay of foule weather) come before they be ſent for. How many evills doe people feare, from which they have no further hurt, then what is bred onely by their cauſeleſſe feares. Nor yet if they be *probable*, muſt wee thinke of them ſo, as to be altogether ſo affected, as if undoubtedly they would come, for ſo wee give certaine ſtrength to an uncertaine croſſe, and uſurpe upon God, by anticipating that which may never come to paſſe. It 1 Sam. 27. 1 was raſhneſſe in *David* to ſay, *I ſhall*

one

one day perish by the hand of Saul. Cap. 10.

If they be such troubles, as will *certainely* come to passe, as parting with friends and contentments (at least) by death; then 1. *thinke* of them so, as not to be much dismayed, but furnish thy heart with strength before-hand, that they may fall the lighter. 2. *Thinke of* them so, as not to give up the bucklers to passion, and lie open as a faire marke for any uncomfortable accident to strike to the heart; nor yet so think of them as to despise them, but to consider of Gods meaning in them, and how to take good by them. 3. *Thinke* of the things we enjoy, so as to moderate our enjoying of them, by considering there must be a parting, and therefore how wee shall bee able to beare it when it comes.

2. *If we desire* not to be overcharged with sorrow, when that which we feare is fallen upon us, we must then before-hand looke that our love to any thing in this world, shoot not so farre, as that, when the time of severing commeth, we part with so much of our hearts by that 2.

Cap. 10. that rent. Thoſe that love too much, will alwayes grieve too much. It is the greatneſſe of our affections which cauſeth the ſharpneſſe of our afflictions. He that cannot abound without pride and high-mindedneſſe, will not want without too much dejectedneſſe. Love is planted for ſuch things as can returne love: and make us better by loving them, wherein we ſhall ſatisfie our love to the full. It is pitty ſo ſweet an affection ſhould be loſt: So ſorrow is for ſinne, and for other things as they make ſinne the more bitter to us. The life of a Chriſtian ſhould be a meditation how to unlooſe his affections from inferiour things; hee will eaſily die that is dead before in affection. But this will never be unleſſe the ſoule ſeeth ſomething better than all things in the world, upon which it may beſtow it ſelfe. In that meaſure our affections die in their exceſſive motion to things below, as they are taken up with the love and admiration of the beſt things. He that is much in heaven in his thoughts, is free from being toſſed with tempeſts here below;

below; the top of those mountaines that are above the middle Region, are so quiet, as that the lightest things, (as ashes) lie still and are not moved. The way to *mortifie earthly members* that bestirre themselves in us, is to *mind things above*: The more the wayes of wisedome leade us on high, the more wee avoid the snares below. Cap. 10. Col. 3. 1. & 5.

In the uncertainty of all events here, labour to frame that contentment in and from our owne selves, which the things themselves will not yeeld; frame peace by freeing our hearts from too much feare, and riches by freeing our hearts from covetous desires. Frame a sufficiencie out of contentednesse; If the soule it self be out of tune, outward things will doe no more good than a faire shooe to a gouty foot.

And seeke not our selves abroad out of our selves in the conceits of other men. A man shall never live quietly, that hath not learned to be set light by of others. He that is little in his owne eyes, will not be troubled to be little in the eyes of others. Men that set too

Cap. 10. high a price upon themſelves, when others will not come to their price, are diſcontent. Thoſe whoſe condition is above their worth, & their pride above their condition, ſhall never want ſorrow; yet wee muſt maintaine our authority and the Image of God in our places, for that is Gods and not ours; and wee ought ſo to carry our ſelves as we approve our ſelves to their conſciences, though wee have not their good words; *Let none deſpiſe thy youth*, ſaith Saint *Paul* to *Timothy*; that is, *Walke ſo before them as they ſhall have no cauſe.* It is not in our owne power what other men thinke or ſpeake, but it is in our power (by Gods grace) to live ſo, that none can thinke ill of us, but by ſlandering, and none beleeve ill but by too much credulity.

3. 3. When any thing ſeiſeth upon us, wee muſt take heed we mingle not our owne paſſions with it; we muſt neither bring ſinne to, nor mingle ſinne with the ſuffering: for that will trouble the ſpirit more than the trouble it ſelfe. Wee are more to deale with our owne hearts,

hearts, than with the trouble it ſelfe. We are not hurt till our ſoules be hurt. God will not have it in the power of any creature to hurt our ſoules, but by our owne treaſon againſt our ſelves. Cap. 10.

Therefore we ſhould have our hearts in continuall jealouſie, for they are ready to deceive the beſt. In ſuddaine encounters, ſome ſinne doth many times diſcover it ſelfe, the ſeed whereof lyeth hid in our natures, which wee thinke our ſelves very free from. Who would have thought the ſeeds of murmuring had lurked in the meeke nature of *Moſes?* That the ſeeds of *murther* had lurked in the *pittifull* heart of *David?* 2 Sam. 12. 9 That the ſeeds of *deniall* of *Chriſt* had lyen hid in the *zealous affection* of *Peter* towards *Chriſt?* Mat. 26. 72. If paſſions breake out from us, which we are not naturally enclined unto, and over which by grace wee have got a great conqueſt; how watchfull need wee be over our ſelves in thoſe things, which by *temper*, *cuſtome*, and *company*, wee are carryed unto? and what cauſe have wee to feare continually that wee are worſe

Cap. 10. than we take our ſelves to be?

There are many unruly paſſions lie hid in us, untill they be drawne out by ſomething that meeteth with them; either 1. by way of oppoſition, as when the truth of God ſpiritually unfolded, meets with ſome beloved corruption, it ſwelleth bigger; the force of Gunpowder is not knowne untill ſome ſparke light on it; and oftentimes the ſtilleſt natures (if croſſed) diſcover the deepeſt corruptions. Sometimes it is drawne out by dealing with the oppoſite ſpirits of other men. Oftentimes retyred men know not what lies hid in themſelves.

2. Sometimes by croſſes, as many people whileſt the freſhneſſe and vigour of their ſpirits laſteth, and while the flower of age, and a full ſupply of all things continueth, ſeeme to be of a pleaſing and calme diſpoſition; but afterwards when changes come, like *Iobs wife*, they are diſcovered. Then, that which in nature is unſubdued, openly appeares.

3. Temptations likewiſe have a ſearch-

searching power to bring that to light in us which was hidden before. Sathan hath beene a winnower, and a sifter of old: hee thought if *Iob* had beene but touched in his body, hee would have cursed God to his face. Cap. 10. Luke 22.3. Iob 1.

Some men out of policy conceale their passion, untill they see some advantage to let it out; as *Esau* smothered his *hatred* untill his *fathers death*. When the restraint is taken away, Men (as we say) shew themselves in their pure naturalls; unloose a Tyger or a Lyon, and you know what he is. *Aperta perdant odia vindictæ locum.* *Salve Leonē & senties.*

4. Further, let us see more every day into the state of our owne soules; what a shame is it that so nimble and swift a spirit as the soule is, that can mount up to heaven, & from thence come downe into the earth in an instant, should whilest it lookes over all other things over-looke it selfe? that it should bee skilfull in the story (almost) of all times and places, and yet ignorant of the story of it selfe? that wee should know what is done in the *Court* and *Country*, and beyond the *Seas*, and be ignorant 4.

Cap. 10. of what is done at home in our owne hearts? that we ſhould live knowne to others, and yet die unknowne to our ſelves? that wee ſhould be able to give account of any thing better than of our ſelves to our ſelves? This is the cauſe why wee ſtand in our owne light; why wee thinke better of our ſelves than others, and better than is cauſe. This is that which hindreth all reformation; for how can wee reforme that which wee are not willing to ſee, and ſo wee loſe one of the ſureſt evidences of our ſincerity, which is, a willingneſſe to ſearch into our hearts, and to bee ſearched by others. A ſincere heart will offer it ſelfe to tryall.

And therefore let us ſift our actions, and our paſſions, and ſee what is *fleſh* in them, and what is *ſpirit*, and ſo ſeparate the *precious* from the *vile*. It is good likewiſe to conſider what ſinne we were guilty of before, which moved GOD to give us up to exceſſe in any paſſion, and wherein we have grieved his Spirit; Paſſion will bee more moderate, when thus it knowes, it muſt come

come to the tryall and cenſure. This courſe will either make us weary of paſſion, or elſe paſſion will make us weary of this ſtrict courſe. Wee ſhall find it the ſafeſt way to give our hearts no reſt, till wee have wrought on them to purpoſe, and gotten the maſtery over them. Cap. 10.

When the ſoule is inured to this dealing with it ſelfe, it will learne the ſkill to command, and paſſions will be ſoone commanded, as being inured to be examined and checked; As we ſee doggs, and ſuch like domeſticall creatures, that will not regard a ſtranger, yet will be quieted in brawles preſently, by the voice of their *Maſter*, to which they are accuſtomed. This fits us for ſervice. Unbroken ſpirits are like unbroken horſes, unfit for any uſe, untill they be thorowly ſubdued.

5. *And* it were beſt to prevent (as much as in us lieth) the very firſt *riſings*, before the ſoule bee overcaſt; Paſſions are but little motions at the firſt, but grow as Rivers doe, greater and greater, the further they are carried

5. Wee muſt cruſh the firſt motions of ſin.

Cap. 10.

ried from their Spring. The first *risings* are the more to bee looked unto, because there is most danger in them, and wee have least care over them. Sin, like rust, or a Canker, will by little and little *eate out* all the graces of the soule. There is no staying when wee are once downe the hill, till we come to the bottome. *No sinne but is easier kept out, than driven out.* If wee cannot prevent wicked thoughts, yet wee may deny them lodging in our hearts. It is our giving willing entertainment to sinfull motions, that increaseth guilt, and hindreth our peace. It is that which moveth God to give us up to a further degree of evill affections. Therefore what we are afraid to *doe* before men, wee should bee afraid to *thinke* before GOD. It would much further our peace to keepe our *judgements* cleare, as being the eye of the soule, whereby we may discerne in every action and passion, what is good, and what is evill: as likewise to preserve tendernesse of heart, that may check us at the first, and not brooke the least evill being discovered. When the

the heart begins once to be kindled, it is easie to smother the smoke of passion, which otherwise will fume up into the head, and gather into so thicke a cloud, as wee shall lose the sight of our selves, and what is best to be done. And therefore *David* here labours to take up his heart at the first; his care was to crush the very *first* insurrections of his soule, before they came to break forth into open rebellion; stormes we know rise out of little gusts. Little risings neglected, cover the soule before wee are aware. If wee would checke these risings, and stifle them in their birth, they would not break out afterwards to the reproach of Religion, to the scandall of the weake, to the offence of the strong, to the *griefe of Gods Spirit* in us, to the disturbance of our owne spirits in doing good, and to the disheartning of us in troubling of our inward peace, and thereby weakning our assurance. Therefore let us stop beginnings as much as may be; and so soone as they begin to rise, let us begin to examine what raised them, and whither Cap. 10.

Cap. 10. whither they are about to carry us.
Psal 4. The way to be *still*, is to *examine* our selves first; And then censure what stands not with reason. As *David* doth, when he had given way to unbefitting thoughts of Gods providence,
Psal. 73. 22. *So foolish*, saith hee, *was I, and as a beast before thee.*

Especially, then looke to these sinfull stirrings, when thou art to deale with God. I am to have communion with a God of peace; What then doe turbulent thoughts and affections in my heart? I am to deale with a patient God, why should I cherish revengefull thoughts? *Abraham* drove away the *birds* from the *sacrifice*, *Gen.* 15. 11. Troublesome thoughts like birds will come before they be sent for, but they should finde entertainment accordingly.

6. 6. *In* all our grievances, let us look to something that may comfort us, as well as discourage: looke to that wee enjoy, as well as that wee want. As in prosperity God mingles some crosses to diet us; so in all crosses there is

something

ſomething to comfort us. As there is a vanity lies hid in the beſt *worldly good*, ſo there is a bleſſing lies hid in the worſt *worldly evill*. GOD uſually maketh up that with ſome advantage in another kinde, wherein we are inferiour to others. Others are in greater place, ſo they are in greater danger. Others bee richer, ſo their cares and ſnares be greater; the *poore in the world* may bee *richer in faith* than they. The ſoule can better digeſt and maſter a low eſtate than a proſperous, and is under ſome abaſement, it is in a leſſe diſtance from God. Others are not ſo afflicted as we, then they have leſſe experience of Gods gracious power than wee. Others may have more healthy bodies, but ſoules leſſe weaned from the world. We would not change conditions with them, ſo as to have their ſpirits with their condition. For one halfe of our lives, the meaneſt are as happy and free from cares, as the greateſt Monarch: that is, whileſt both ſleepe; and uſually the ſleepe of the one, is ſweeter than the ſleepe of the other.

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Iam. 2. 5.

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other. What is all that the earth can afford us, if God deny health? and this a man in the meaneſt condition may enjoy. That wherein one man differs from another, is but title, and but for a little time; Death levelleth all.

There is ſcarce any man, but the good hee receives from GOD is more than the ill hee feeles, if our unthankfull hearts would ſuffer us to thinke ſo. Is not our health more than our ſickeneſſe? doe we not enjoy more than we want, I meane, of the things that are neceſſary? Are not our good dayes more than our evill? but we would goe to heaven upon Roſes, and uſually one croſſe is more taken to heart, than an hundred bleſſings. So unkindly wee deale with God. Is God indebted to us? doth he owe us any thing? thoſe that deſerve nothing, ſhould bee content with any thing.

Wee ſhould looke to others as good as our ſelves (as well as to our ſelves) and then we ſhall ſee it is not our owne caſe onely; who are we that we ſhould looke for an exempted condition from thoſe

thoſe troubles which Gods deareſt children are addicted unto? Cap. 10.

Thus when we are ſurpriſed contrary to our looking for and liking, wee ſhould ſtudy rather how to exerciſe ſome grace, than give way to any paſſion. Thinke, now is a time to exerciſe our *patience*, our *wiſedome*, and other graces. By this meanes wee ſhall turne that to our greateſt advantage, which *Satan* intendeth greateſt hurt to us by. Thus we ſhall not onely maſter every condition, but make it ſerviceable to our good. If nature teach *Bees*, not onely to gather honey out of ſweet flowers, but out of bitter: Shall not grace teach us to draw even out of the bittereſt condition, ſomething to better our ſoules? Wee learne to tame all creatures, even the wildeſt, that wee may bring them to our uſe; and why ſhould wee give way to our owne unruly paſſions?

7. It were good to have in our eye, the beauty of a well ordered ſoule, and wee ſhould thinke that nothing in this world is of ſufficient worth to put us out 7.

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out of frame. The ſanctified ſoule ſhould be like the *Sunne* in this, which though it worketh upon all theſe inferiour bodies, and cheriſheth them by light and influence; yet is not moved nor wrought upon by them againe, but keepeth its owne luſtre and diſtance: So our ſpirits being of a heavenly breed, ſhould rule other things beneath them, and not be ruled by them. It is a holy ſtate of ſoule to bee under the power of nothing beneath it ſelfe; Are we ſtirred? then conſider, Is this matter worth the loſſe of my quiet? What wee eſteeme, that wee love, what wee love, we labour for; And therefore let us eſteem highly of a cleare calme temper, whereby wee both enjoy our God, and our ſelves, and know how to ranke all things elſe. It is againſt nature for inferiour things to rule that, which the wiſe Diſpoſer of all things hath ſet above them. Wee owe the *fleſh* neither ſuit nor ſervice, wee are no *debtors* to it.

The more wee ſet before the ſoule that quiet eſtate in heaven, which the ſoules

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soules of perfect men now enjoy, and it selfe ere long shall enjoy there, The more it will be in love with it, and endevour to attaine unto it. And because the soule never worketh better, than when it is raised up by some strong and sweet affection; let us looke upon our nature, as it is in Christ, in whom it is pure, sweet, calme, meeke, every way lovely. This sight is a changing sight, love is an affection of imitation, we affect a likenesse to him we love. Let us *learne of Christ to be humble and meeke*, and then wee *shall finde rest to our soules*. The setting of an excellent idea and platforme before us, will raise and draw up our soules higher, and make us sensible of the least moving of spirit, that shall be contrary to that, the attainement whereof wee have in our desires. He will hardly attaine to meane things, that sets not before him higher perfection. Naturally we love to see symetry and proportion, even in a dead picture, and are much taken with some curious peece. But why should wee not rather labour to keepe the affections of the soule

Anima nunquam melius agit, quã ex imperio alicujus insignis affectus.

Mat. 11. 29.

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ſoule in due proportion? Seeing a meek and well ordered ſoule is not onely lovely in the ſight of men and Angels, but is much ſet by, by the great God himſelfe. But now the greateſt care of thoſe that ſet higheſt price upon themſelves is, how to compoſe their outward carriage in ſome gracefull manner, never ſtudying how to compoſe their ſpirits; and rather how to cover the deformity of their paſſions than to cure them. Whence it is that the fouleſt inward vices are covered with the faireſt vizards, and to make this the worſe, all this is counted the beſt breeding.

The *Hebrewes* placed all their happineſſe in peace, and when they would compriſe much in one word, they would wiſh peace. This was that the *Angels* brought *newes* of from *heaven*, at the birth of Chriſt. Now peace riſeth out of quietneſſe and order, and God that is *the God of peace, is the God of order* firſt. What is health, but when all the members are in their due poſiture, and all the humors in a ſetled quiet? Whence

1 Cor. 14. 33.

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Whence ariseth the beauty of the world, but from that comely order wherein every creature is placed; the more glorious and excellent creatures above, and the lesse below? So it is in the soule; the best constitution of it is when by the Spirit of God it is so ordered, as that all be in subjection to the Law of the minde. What a sight were it for the feet to be where the head is, and the earth to be where the heaven is, to see all turned upside downe? And to a spirituall eye it seemes as great a deformity, to see the soule to be under the rule of sinfull passions.

There must be an uniformity in the lives of Christians.

Comelinesse riseth out of the fit proportion of divers members to make up one body, when every member hath a beauty in it selfe, and is likewise well suited to other parts; A faire face and a crooked body, comely upper parts, and the lower parts uncomely, suit not well; because comelinesse stands in oneneſſe, in a fit agreement of many parts to one; when there is the head of a man, and the body of a beast, it is a monster in nature; And is

Cap. 10. it not as monſtrous for to have an underſtanding head, and a fierce untamed heart? It cannot but raiſe up a holy indignation in us againſt theſe *riſings*, when wee conſider how unbeſeeming they are; What doe theſe baſe paſſions in a heart dedicated to God, and given up to the government of his Spirit? What an indignity is it for Princes to goe a foot, and ſervants on horſe back? for thoſe to rule, whoſe place is to be ruled? as being good attendants, but bad guides. It was *Chams* curſe to be a *ſervant of ſervants*.

8. 8. This muſt be ſtrengthned with a ſtrong *ſelfe-deniall*, without which there can be no good done in Religion.

There be two things that moſt trouble us in the way to heaven; corruption within us, and the croſſe without us; that which is within us muſt be denied, that that which is without us may bee endured. Otherwiſe we cannot follow him by whom wee looke to be ſaved. The gate, the entrance of Religion, is narrow; we muſt ſtrip our ſelves of our ſelves before we can enter; if we bring any

Chriſtians muſt deny themſelves

any ruling lust to Religion, it wil prove a bitter root of some grosse sinne, or of apastacie and finall desperation. Cap. 10.

Those that sought the *praise of men, more than the praise of God*, could not beleeve, because that lust of ambition, would, when it should be crossed, draw them away. The young man thought it better for Christ to lose a Disciple, than that hee should *lose his possession*, and therefore *went away* as hee came: The *third ground* came to nothing, because the Plough had not gone deepe enough to breake up the rootes, whereby their hearts were fastned to earthly contentments. This selfe-deniall wee must carry with us through all the parts of Religion, both in our active and passive obedience; for in obedience there must be a subjection to a superiour; but corrupt selfe, *neither is subject, nor can be*, it will have an oare in every thing, and maketh every thing, yea, Religion serviceable to it self. It is the Idol of the world, or rather the god that is set highest of all in the soule; & so God himselfe is made but an Idol. It is hard

Ioh. 12. 43.

Mat. 19. 22.

Mat. 13. 22

Rom. 8.

Cap. 11. to deny a friend who is another ſelfe, harder to deny a wife that lyeth in the boſome, but moſt hard to deny our ſelves. Nothing ſo neere us as our ſelves to our ſelves, and yet nothing ſo farre off. Nothing ſo dear, and yet nothing ſo malicious and troubleſome. Hypocrites Mic. 6. would part with *the fruit of their body*, ſooner than *the ſinne* of their ſoules.

Cap. XI.

Signes of victory over our ſelves, and of a ſubdued ſpirit.

Queſt. *But how ſhall we know, whether we have by grace got the victory over our ſelves or not?*

Anſw. 1. I anſwer, If in good actions we ſtand not ſo much upon the credit of the action, as upon the good that is done. What wee doe as unto God, wee looke for acceptance from God. It was *Ionas* his fault to ſtand more upon his owne reputation, than the glory of Gods mercy. It is a prevailing ſigne, when though there be no outward encou-

rage-

ragements. Nay, though there be discouragements, yet wee can rest in the comfort of a good intention. For usually inward comfort is a note of inward sincerity. *Iehu* must be *seene*, or else all is lost. Cap. 11. 2 Kings 10 16.

2. It is a good evidence of some prevailing, when upon Religious grounds wee can crosse our selves in those things unto which our hearts stand most affected, this sheweth wee reserve GOD his owne place in our hearts. 2.

3. When being privy to our owne inclination and temper, wee have gotten such a supply of spirit, as that the *grace* which is contrary to our temper appeares in us. As oft wee see, none more patient, than those that are naturally enclined to intemperancie of passion, because naturall proneneſſe maketh them jealous over themselves. Some, out of feare of being over-much moved, are not moved so much as they should be: This jealousie stirreth us up to a carefull use of all helps; Where grace is helped by nature, there a little 3.

Cap. 11. grace will goe farre; but where there is much untowardneſſe of nature, there much grace is not ſo well diſcerned. *Sowre wines need much ſweetning*, And that is moſt ſpirituall which hath leaſt help from nature, and is won by prayer and paines.

4. 4. When wee are not partiall when the things concerne our ſelves. *David* could allow himſelfe another mans wife, and yet judgeth another man worthy of death for taking away a *poore mans lambe*. Men uſually favour themſelves too much, when they are Chancellors in their owne cauſe, and meaſure all things by their private intereſt. Hee hath taken a good degree in Chriſts Schoole, that hath learned to forget himſelfe here.

a Sam. 12. 4

5. 5. It is a good ſigne, when upon diſcovery of ſelf-ſeeking we can gaine upon our corruption; and are willing to ſearch and to be ſearched, what our inclination is, and where it faileth. That which we favour, we are tender of, it muſt not be touched. A good heart, when any corruption is diſcovered by a ſearching

a searching *Ministery*, is affected as if it had found out a deadly enemy. Touchinesse and passion argues guilt. Cap. 11.

6. This is a signe of a mans victory over himselfe, when hee loves health and peace of body and minde, with a supply of all needfull things, chiefly for this end, that hee may with more freedome of spirit serve God in doing good to others. So soone as grace entreth into the heart, it frameth the heart to be in some measure publique: and thinks it hath not its end, in the bare enjoying of any thing, untill it can improve what it hath for a further end. Thus to seeke our selves is to deny our selves, and thus to deny our selves, is truely to seeke our selves. It is no selfe-seeking, when wee care for no more than that, without which we cannot comfortably serve God. When the soule can say unto GOD, Lord as thou wouldest have me serve thee in my place, so grant me such a measure of health and strength, wherein I may serve thee. 6.

But what if God thinks it good, that *Object.*

Cap. 11. I shall serve him in weakneſſe, and in want, and ſuffering.

Anſw. Then, it is a comfortable ſigne of gaining over our owne wills, when we can yeeld our ſelves to bee diſpoſed of by God, as knowing beſt what is good for us. There is no condition but therein we may exerciſe ſome grace, and honour GOD in ſome meaſure. Yet becauſe ſome enlargement of condition is ordinarily that eſtate wherein wee are beſt able to doe good in; wee may in the uſe of meanes deſire it, and upon that, reſigne up our ſelves wholly unto GOD, and make his will our will, without exception or reſervation, and care for nothing more than wee can have with his leave and love. This *Iob* had exerciſed his heart unto; whereupon in that great change of condition, *hee ſinned not*, that is, fell not into the ſinnes incident to that dejected and miſerable ſtate; into ſinnes of rebellion and diſcontent. He carried his croſſes comely, with that ſtayedneſſe and reſignedneſſe, which became a holy man.

Iob 2.

7. It

7. It is further a cleare evidence of a ſpirit ſubdued, when wee will diſcover the truth of our affection towards God and his people, though with cenſure of others. *David* was content to endure the cenſure of neglecting the ſtate and Majeſty of a King, out of joy for ſetling the Arke. *Nehemiah* could not diſſemble his griefe for the ruines of the Church, though in the Kings preſence: It is a comfortable ſigne of the waſting of ſelfe-love, when wee can be at a point what becomes of our ſelves, ſo it goe well with the cauſe of God and the Church. Cap. 11. 7. Neh. 2. 3.

Now the way to prevaile ſtill more over our ſelves, (as when we are to doe or ſuffer any thing, or withſtand any perſon in a good cauſe, &c.) is, not to thinke that we are to deale with men, yea, or with Devils ſo much as with our ſelves. The Saints reſiſted their enemies to death, by reſiſting their owne corruptions firſt: if we once get the victory over our ſelves, all other things are conquered to our eaſe. All the hurt Satan and the world doe us, is, by

How to get the maſtery of our ſelves.

Cap. 11. *Te vince & mundus tibi victus eſt, &c.*

by correſpondency with our ſelves. All things are ſo farre under us, as wee are above our ſelves.

For the further ſubduing of our ſelves, it is good to follow ſinne to the firſt Hold and Caſtle, which is corrupt nature; The ſtreames will leade us to the Spring head: Indeed the moſt apparant diſcovery of ſinne is in the outward carriage; wee ſee it in the fruit before in the root; as wee ſee grace in the expreſſion before in the affection: But yet we ſhall never hate ſin thorowly, untill we conſider it in the poyſoned root from whence it ariſeth.

That which leaſt troubles a naturall man, doth moſt of all trouble a true Chriſtian; A naturall man is ſometimes troubled with the fruit of his corruption, and the conſequents of guilt and puniſhment that attend it; but a true hearted Chriſtian, with corruption it ſelfe; this drives him to complaine with St. *Paul, O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver mee,* not from the members onely, but *from this body of death?* Which is as noyſome

Rom. 7.

to

to my ſoule, as a dead carrion is to my ſenſes; which together with the members, is marvellouſly nimble and active; and hath no dayes, or houres, or minuits of reſt; alwayes laying about it to enlarge it ſelfe, and like ſpring-water, which the more it iſſueth out, the more it may. Cap. 11.

It is a good way, upon any particular breach of our inward peace, preſently to have recourſe to that which breeds and foments all our diſquiet. Lord, what doe I complaine of this my unruly paſſion? I carry a *nature* about mee ſubject to breake out continually upon any occaſion; Lord, ſtrike at the root, and dry up the fountaine in mee. Thus *David* doth ariſe from the guilt of thoſe two foule ſins, of *Murther* and *Adultery*, to the ſinne of his nature, the root it ſelfe; As if he ſhould ſay, Lord, it is not theſe actuall ſins that defile me onely; but if I looke back to my firſt conception, I was tainted in the ſpring of my nature. Pſal. 51.

This is that here which put *Davids* ſoule ſo much out of frame; For from whence

Cap. 11. whence was this contradiction? And whence was this contradiction so unwearied, in making head againe and againe against the checks of the Spirit in him? Whence was it that *Corruption* would not be said Nay? Whence were these *sudden* and unlookt for objections of the *flesh*? But from the remainder of old *Adam* in him, which like a *Michol* within us is either *scoffing* at the wayes of God; or as *Iobs wife*, fretting and *thwarting* the motions of Gods Spirit in us; which prevailes the more, because it is homebred in us: whereas holy motions are strangers to most of our soules. Corruption is loth that a *new commer in* should take so much upon him as to *controule*: As the *Sodomites* thought much that *Lot* being a *stranger* should intermeddle amongst them. If God once leave us as he did *Hezekiah* to try what is in us, what should he find but darkenesse, rebellion, unrulinesse, doubtings, &c. in the best of us? This *flesh* of ours hath principles against all Gods principles, and lawes against all Gods lawes, and reasons a-

Gen. 19. 9.

gainst

gainſt all GODS reaſons. Oh! if wee could but one whole houre ſeriouſly think of the impure iſſue of our hearts, it would bring us downe upon our knees in humiliation before God. But wee can never whileſt we live, ſo thorowly as we ſhould, ſee into the depth of our deceitfull hearts, nor yet be humbled enough for what we ſee; For though we ſpeake of it and confeſſe it, yet we are not ſo ſharpned againſt this corrupt fleſh of ours, as wee ſhould. How ſhould it humble us, that the ſeeds of the vileſt ſinne, even of the *Sinne againſt the holy Ghoſt* is in us? and no thanke to us that they breake not our. It ſhould humble us to heare of any great enormous ſinne in another man, conſidering what our owne nature would proceed unto if it were not reſtrained. We may ſee our owne *nature* in them as *face anſwering face*; If God ſhould take his *Spirit* from us, there is enough in us to defile a whole world; And although wee bee ingrafted into Chriſt, yet wee carry about us a reliſh of the old ſtocke ſtill. *David* was a man Cap. 11.

Cap. 11. man of a good naturall constitution; and for grace, a man after Gods owne heart, and had got the better of himselfe in a great measure, and had learned to overcome himselfe in matter of
1 Sam 24.6 revenge, as in *Sauls* case: yet now wee see the vessell is shaken a little, and the dregs appeare that were in the bottome before. Alas, wee know not our owne hearts, till wee plow with Gods heifer, till his Spirit bringeth a light into our soules. It is good to consider how this impure *spring* breaks out *diversly*, in the divers conditions wee are in; there is no estate of life, nor no action we undertake, wherein it will not put forth it selfe to defile us: It is so full of poyson that it taints whatsoever wee doe, both our natures, conditions, and actions. In a *prosperous* condition (like *David*)
Psal. 30.6. we thinke we *shall never be moved.* Under the *Crosse* the *soule* is *troubled* and drawne to murmur, and to be sullen, and sink downe in discouragement, to be in a heat almost to blasphemy, to be weary of our callings, and to quarrell with every thing in our way. See the folly

folly and fury of moſt men in this, for us ſilly wormes to contradict the great God: And to whoſe perill is it? Is it not our own? Let us gather our ſelves with all our wit and ſtrength together: Alas, what can wee doe but provoke him, and get more ſtripes? Wee may bee ſure hee will deale with us, as wee deale with our children, if they be froward and unquiet for leſſer matters, we will make them cry and be ſullen for ſomething: Refractory ſtubborne horſes are the more ſpurred, and yet ſhake not off the rider. Cap. 12.

Cap. XII.

Of Originall righteouſneſſe, naturall corruption, Satans joyning with it, and our duty thereupon.

§. 1.

But here marke a plot of ſpirituall treaſon; Sathan joyning with our corruption, ſetteth the wit on work to perſwade the ſoule, that this inward rebellion is not ſo bad, becauſe it is naturall

Cap. 12. Most of the most dangerous opinions of Popery, as Justification by *works*, state of *perfection*, *merit*, *satisfaction*, *supererogation*, &c. spring frō hence that they have sleight cōceits of cōcupiscence as a condition of nature; Yet some of them as *Michael Bayus* professor at *Louan*, &c. are sound in the point. *Answ.* Gen. 1.

turall to us, as a condition of nature, rising out of the first principles in our creation, and was curbed in by the bridle of original righteousnesse, which they would have accessary and supernaturall, and therefore alledge that *concupiscence* is lesse odious and more excusable in us, and so no great danger in yeelding and betraying our Souls unto it, and by that meanes perswading us, that that which is our deadliest enemie, hath no harme in it, nor meaneth any to us.

This rebellion of lusts against the understanding, is not naturall, as our nature came out of Gods hands at the first: For this being evill and the cause of evill, could not come from God who is Good, and the cause of all good, and nothing but good: who upon the creation of all things pronounced them *good*, and after the creation of man pronounced of all things that they were *very good*. Now that which is ill and very ill, cannot be seated at the same time in that which is good and *very good*: GOD created man at the first, *right*,

right, he of himselfe *sought out many inventions*. As God beautified the heaven with starres, and decked the earth with variety of plants, and hearbs, and flowers; So hee adorned man his prime creature here below, with all those endowments that were fit for a happy condition, and originall righteousnesse was fit and due to an originall and happy condition. Therefore as the Angels were created with all Angelicall perfections, and as our bodies were created in an absolute temper of all the humours; so the soule was created in that sweet harmony wherein there was no discord, as an instrument in tune fit to be moved to any duty; as a cleane neat glasse the soule represented Gods image and holinesse. Cap. 12.

§. 2.

Therefore it is so farre, that concupiscence should be *naturall*, that the contrary to it, namely, *Righteousnesse*, wherein *Adam* was created, was naturall to him; though it were planted in mans nature by God, and so in re-

Cap. 12. gard of the cauſe of it, was ſupernaturall, yet becauſe it was agreeable to that happy condition, without which he could not ſubſiſt, in that reſpect it was naturall, and ſhould have beene derived (if hee had ſtood) together with his nature, to his poſterity. As heat in the ayre, though it hath its firſt impreſſion from the heat of the Sunne, yet is naturall, becauſe it agreeth to the nature of that element: and though man be compounded of a ſpirituall and earthly ſubſtance, yet it is naturall that the *baſer* earthly part ſhould be ſubject to the *Superiour*, becauſe where there is different degrees of worthineſſe, it is fit there ſhould be a ſubordination of the meaner to that which is in order higher. The body *naturally* deſires food and bodily contentments, yet in a man indued with *reaſon*, this deſire is governed ſo as it becomes not inordinate: A beaſt ſinnes not in its appetite, becauſe it hath no power above to order it. A man that lives in a ſolitary place farre remote from company, may take his liberty to live as it pleaſeth him;

him; but if hee comes to live under the government of some well ordered Citie, then hee is bound to submit to the lawes, and customes of that Citie, under penalty, upon any breach of order: so the risings of the soule, howsoever in other creatures they are not blameable, having no commander in themselves, above them, yet in man they are to bee ordered by reason and judgement. Cap. 12.

Therefore it cannot be, that *concupiscence* should be *naturall*, in regard of the state of creation; It was *Adams* sin which had many sinnes in the wombe of it, that brought this disorder upon the Soule; *Adams* person first corrupted our nature, and nature being corrupted, corrupts our persons, and our persons being corrupted, encrease the corruption of our nature, by *custome* of sinning, which is another nature in us; as a streame the farther it runnes from the spring head, the more it enlargeth its channell, by the running of lesser rivers into it, untill it empties it selfe into the Sea; So corruption, till it be

Cap. 12. overpowred by *grace*, swelleth bigger and bigger, so that though this disorder was not naturall, in regard of the first creation, yet since the *fall* it is become *naturall*, even as wee call that which is common to the whole kinde, and propagated from parents to their children, to bee naturall; So that it is both naturall and against nature, *naturall* now, but against *nature* in its first perfection.

And because corruption is *naturall* to
1. us, therefore 1. we *delight* in it, whence it comes to passe, that our soules are carried along in an easie current, to the committing of any sinne without op-
2. position. 2. Because it is *naturall*, therefore it is unwearied and restlesse, as light bodies are not wearied in their motion upwards, nor heavie bodies in their motion downwards, nor a streame in its running to the Sea, because it is *naturall*: Hence it is that the *old man* is never tyred in the *works of the flesh*, nor never drawne dry. When men cannot act sinne, yet they will love sinne, and act it over againe by pleasing thoughts of

of it, and by sinfull speculation suck out the delight of sinne; and are grieved, not for their sinne, but because they want strength and opportunity to commit it; If sinne would not leave them, they would never leave sinne. This corruption of our nature is not wrought in us by reason and perswasions, for then it might be satisfied with reasons, but it is in us by way of a naturall *inclination*, as iron is carried to the Loadstone; And till our natures be altered, no reason will long prevaile, but our sinfull disposition as a streame stopt for a little while, will breake out with greater violence. 3. Being *naturall* it needs no help, as the earth needs no tillage to bring forth weeds. When our corrupt nature is caried contrary to that which is good, it is carried of it selfe. As when Sathan *lyes* or *murthers*, it comes from his owne cursed nature; and though Sathan joyneth with our *corrupt nature*, yet the proneneſſe to sinne and the consent unto it, is of our selves. Cap. 12. 3.

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§. 3.

Quest. But how shall wee know, that Satan joynes with our nature, in those actions unto which nature it selfe is prone?

Answ. Then Satan addes his helpe, when our nature is carried more eagerly then ordinary to sin; as when a streame runs violently, wee may know that there is not onely the tide, but the winde that carrieth it.

So in sudden and violent rebellions, it is Satan that pusheth on *nature* left to it selfe of God. A stone falls downward by its owne weight, but if it falls very swiftly, wee know it is throwne downe by an outward mover. Though there were no Devill, yet our corrupt *nature* would act Satans part against it selfe, it would have a supply of wickednesse, (as a Serpent doth poyson) from it selfe, it hath a spring to feed it.

Nemo se palpet de suo, Satan est, &c. Aug.

But that man whilest he lives *here* is not altogether excluded from hope of happinesse, and hath a *nature* not so large and capable of sinne as *Satans*; whereupon hee is not so obstinate in hating

hating God, and working miſchiefe as hee, &c. Otherwiſe there is for *kinde* the ſame *curſed* diſpoſition, and *malice* of nature againſt true goodnes in man, which is in the *devils* and damned ſpirits themſelves. Cap. 12.

It is no mitigation of ſinne, to plead it is *naturall*, for naturall diſeaſes (as leproſies) that are derived from Parents, are moſt dangerous, and leaſt curable; Neither is this any excuſe, for becauſe as it is *naturall*, ſo it is *voluntary*, not onely in *Adam*, in whoſe loines wee were, and therefore ſinned; but likewiſe in regard of *our ſelves*, who are ſo far from ſtopping the courſe of ſinne either in our ſelves or others, that wee feed and ſtrengthen it, or at leaſt give more way to it, and provide leſſe againſt it than wee ſhould, untill we come under the government of grace; and by that meanes, we juſtifie *Adams* ſinne, and that corrupt eſtate that followeth upon it, and ſhew, that if *wee* had beene in *Adams* condition our ſelves, *wee* would have made that ill choice which hee made. And though

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this corruption of our nature be neceſſary to us, yet it is no violent neceſſity from an outward cauſe, but a neceſſity that we willingly pull upon our ſelves, and therefore ought the more to humble us; for the more neceſſarily we ſin, the more voluntarily, and the more *voluntarily*, the more neceſſarily; the will putting it ſelfe *voluntarily* into theſe fetters of ſinne. *Neceſſity* is no plea, when the *will* is the immediate cauſe of any action; Mens hearts tell them they might rule their *deſires* if they would; For tell a man of any *diſh* which hee liketh, that there is poyſon in it, and he will not meddle with it; So tell him that *death* is in that *ſinne* which hee is about to commit, and he will *abſtaine* if hee beleeve it be ſo; if hee beleeve it not, it is his *voluntary* unbeleefe and atheiſme.

Suſpiraham ligatus, non ferro aliquo, ſed mea ferrea voluntate, vellē meum tenebat inimicus & inde mihi catenam fecerit. Aug. Confeſſ.

Quicquid ſibi imperavit animus, obtinuit. Seneca.

If the will would uſe that ſoveraigntie it ſhould, and could at the firſt, wee ſhould bee altogether freed from this neceſſity. Men are not damned becauſe they *cannot* doe better, but becauſe they *will* doe no better; If there were no *will* there

there would be no hell; For men *willingly* submit to the rule and law of sin, they plead for it, and like it so well, as they hate nothing so much as that which any way withstandeth those lawlesse lawes.

Cap. 12. *Cessat voluntas propria & non erit infernus*

Those that think it their happinesse to doe what they will, that they might bee *free*, crosse their owne desires, for this is the way to make them most perfect *slaves*. When our will is the next immediate cause of sinne, and our consciences beare witnesse to us that it is so; then conscience is ready to take Gods part in accusing our selves: Our consciences tell us to our faces that wee might doe more then we doe to hinder sinne; and that when we sinne, it is not through weaknesse, but out of the wickednesse of our nature.

Our Consciences tell us that wee sinne not onely willingly, but often with delight, (so farre forth as wee are not subdued by grace, or awed by something above us,) and that wee esteeme any restraint to bee our misery. And where by grace the *will* is strengthened,

Cap. 12. thened, ſo, that it yeelds not a full conſent, yet a gracious ſoule is humbled even for the ſudden riſings of corruption that prevent deliberation. As here *David*, though he withſtood the riſings of his heart, yet hee was troubled, that hee had ſo vile a heart that would riſe up againſt God, and therefore takes it downe. Who is there that hath not cauſe to be humbled, not only for his corruption, but that he doth not *reſiſt* it with that ſtrength, nor labour to prevent it with that diligence, which his heart tels him he might?

Wee cannot have too deepe apprehenſions of this *breeding* ſinne, the *mother* and nurſe of all abominations, for the more wee conſider the height, the depth, the breadth and length of it, the more ſhall wee bee humbled in our

Epheſ. 3. 18 ſelves, and magnifie the *height*, the *depth*, the *breadth*, and the *length* of Gods mercy in CHRIST. The favourers of *nature* are alwayes the enemies of *grace*; This which ſome think and ſpeake ſo weakly and faintly of, is a worſe enemy to us than the devill himſelfe;

himſelfe; a more neere, a more reſtleſſe, a more traiterous enemy, for by intelligence with it the Devill doth us all the hurt hee doth, and by it maintaines forts in us againſt goodneſſe. This is that which either by diſcouragement or contrariety hinders us *from* good: or elſe by deadneſſe, tediouſneſſe, diſtractions, or corrupt aimes hinders us *in doing* good, this putteth us on to evill, and abuſeth what is good *in us*, or *from us*, to cover or colour ſinne; and furniſhes us with reaſons either to maintaine what is evill, or ſhifts to tranſlate it upon falſe cauſes, or fences to arme us againſt whatſoever ſhall oppoſe us in our wicked waies: Though it neither can nor will be good, yet it would bee thought to be ſo by others, and enforces a conceit upon it ſelfe that it is good. It impriſons and keepes downe all *light* that may diſcover it, both within it ſelfe, and without it ſelf, if it lie in its power: It flatters it ſelfe, and would have all the world flatter it too, which if it doth not, it frets; eſpecially if it bee once Cap. 12.

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once discovered and crossed: hence comes all the plotting against goodnesse, that sinne may reigne without controule. Is it not a lamentable case that man, who out of the very principles of nature cannot but desire happinesse and abhorre misery, yet should bee in love with eternall misery in the causes of it, and abhorre happinesse in the wayes that leade unto it? This sheweth us what a wonderfull deordination and disorder is brought upon mans nature; For every other *creature* is naturally carryed to that which is helpfull unto it, and shunneth that which is any way hurtfull and offensive; Onely man is in love with his owne bane, and fights for those lusts that fight against his soule.

§. 4.

Sixefold duty in respect of naturall corruption

1.

Our duty is, 1. to labour to see this sinfull disposition of ours, not onely as it is discovered in the Scriptures, but as it discovers it selfe in our owne hearts; this must bee done by the light and teaching of Gods Spirit, who knowes

knowes us and all the turnings and windings and by-wayes of our ſoules, better than wee know our ſelves. Wee muſt *ſee* it as the moſt odious and loth-ſome thing in the world, making our *natures* contrary to Gods pure nature, and of all other duties making us moſt indiſpoſed to *ſpirituall* duties, wherein wee ſhould have neereſt communion with God; becauſe it ſeizeth on the very ſpirits of our mindes. Cap. 12.

2. Wee ſhould looke upon it, as worſe than any of thoſe filthy ſtreames that come from it, nay than all the impure iſſues of our lives together; there is more fire in the fornace than in the ſparkles; There is more poyſon in the *root* than in all the branches; for if the ſtreame were ſtopt, and the branches cut off, and the ſparkles quenched, yet there would bee a perpetuall ſupply; as in good things, the cauſe is better than the effect; ſo in ill things the cauſe is worſe. Every fruit ſhould make this poyſonfull *root* more hatefull to us, and the root ſhould make us hate the *fruit* more, as comming from ſo bad a root, as 2.

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Evils of not bewailing our corrupt nature.

as being worse in the cause, than in it selfe; the *affection* is worse than the *action*, which may be forced or counterfeited. Wee cry out upon particular sinnes, but are not humbled as wee should be for our impure dispositions; Without the sight of which there can

1. be no *sound repentance* arising from the deep and through consideration of sin;

2. no desire to be *new moulded*, without which we can never enter into so holy

3. a place as heaven; no *selfe denyall* till we see the best things in us are enmity

4. against God; no high prizing of Christ, without who̅ our natures, our persons,

5. and our actions are abominable in Gods sight; nor any sollid peace setled in the soule; which peace ariseth not from the ignorance of our corruption, or compounding with it, but from sight and hatred of it, and strength against it.

3. 3. Consider the *spiritualnesse* and large *extent* of the *law* of God, together with the curse annexed, which forbids not onely particular sinnes, but *all* the kindes, degrees, occasions, and furtherances of *sinne* in the whole breadth and

and depth of it, and our very *nature* it selfe so farre as it is corrupted; For want of which, we see many *alive without the law*, joviall and merry from ignorance of their misery, who if they did but once see their natures and lives in *that glasse*, it would take away that livelinesse and courage from them, and make them vile in their owne eyes; Men usually *looke* themselves in the lawes of the *State* wherein they live, and think themselves good enough, if they are free from the danger of *penall* statutes; *this* glasse discovers *onely* foule spots, grosse scandalls, and breakings out: Or else they judge of themselves by *parts* of *nature*, or common *grace*, or by outward conformity to *Religion*, or else by that light they have to guide themselves in the affaires of this life, by their faire and civill carriage, &c. and thereupon *live* and *die* without any sense of the *power of godlinesse*, which begins in the right knowledge of *our selves*, and ends in the right knowledge of GOD. The *spiritualnesse* and *purity* of the *law* should teach us to consider the

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Rom. 7. 2.

Cap. 12. the purity and *holineſſe of God*; the bringing of our ſoules into whoſe preſence will make us to *abhorre our ſelves* (with *Iob*) *in duſt and aſhes*; contraries are beſt ſeene by ſetting one neere the other; Whileſt we looke onely on our ſelves, and upon others amongſt whom we live, we thinke our ſelves to be ſome body. It is an evidence of ſome ſincerity wrought in the ſoule, not to ſhunne that light which may let us ſee the foul corners of our hearts and lives.

Job 42.6.

4. 4. The conſideration of this likewiſe ſhould enforce us to carry a double *guard* over our ſoules, *David* was very watchfull, yet we ſee here he was ſurprized unawares by the ſudden rebellion of his heart; we ſhould obſerve our hearts as governours doe rebels and mutinous perſons: Obſervation awes the heart; Wee ſee to what an exceſſe ſinne groweth in thoſe that deny themſelves nothing, nor will be denied in any thing; who if they may doe what they will, will doe what they may; who turne *liberty* into licence, and make all their abilities and advantages

to

to doe good, contributary to the commands of overruling and unruly lusts. Cap. 12.

Were it not that God partly by his power suppresseth, and partly by his grace subdueth the disorders of mans nature for the good of society, and the gathering of a Church upon earth; *Corruption* would swell to that excesse, that it would overturne and confound all things together with it selfe. Although there bee a *common corruption* that cleaves to the nature of all men in generall, as men, (as *distrust* in GOD, *selfe-love*, a carnall and *worldly disposition*, &c) yet God so ordereth it, that in some there is an *ebbe* and decrease, in others (GOD justly leaving them to themselves) a *flow* and encrease of sinfulnesse, even beyond the bounds of ordinary corruption, whereby they become worse than themselves, either like beasts in sensuality, or like devils in spirituall wickednesse; though all be blinde in spirituall things, yet some are more *blinded*: though all be hard hearted, yet some are more *hardened*: though all be corrupt in evill courses, yet some

Cap. 12. are more *corrupted:* and ſinke deeper into rebellion than others.

Sometimes God ſuffers this corruption to breake out in *civill* men, yea even in his *owne* children, that they may know themſelves the better, and becauſe *ſometimes* corruption is weakned not onely by ſmothering, but by having a vent, whereupon *grace* ſtirres up in the ſoule *a freſh* hatred and revenge againſt it; and lets us ſee a neceſſity of having *whole* Chriſt, not onely to pardon ſinne, but to purge and cleanſe our ſinfull natures. But yet that which is *ill* in it ſelfe, muſt not be done for the good that comes by it by accident; this muſt be a comfort after our ſurpriſalls, not an encouragement before.

Caution.

5. 5. And becauſe the *divine nature*, wrought in us by divine *truth*, together with the *Spirit of God*, is the onely counter-poyſon againſt all ſinne, and whatſoever is contrary to God in us, therefore wee ſhould labour that the truth of God may bee grafted in our hearts, that ſo all the powers of our ſoules

soules may rellish of it, that there may be a sweet agreement betwixt the soule and all things that are spirituall, that truth being ingrafted in our hearts, we may be ingrafted into Christ, and grow up in him, and put him on more and more, and be changed into his likenesse. Nothing in heaven or earth will worke out corruption and change our dispositions but the *Spirit* of Christ, clothing divine truths, with a divine power to this purpose. Cap. 12.

6. When corruption rises *pray* it downe, as S *Paul* did, and to strengthen thy prayer, *claime* the promise of the new *covenant*, that God would *circumcise our hearts*, and *wash us with cleane water*, that hee would *write his law in our hearts*, and give us his *holy Spirit* when we *begge it*; And looke upon Christ as a publique *fountaine* open for *Iudah* and *Ierusalem to wash in*. 6. 2 Cor. 12. 8. Ezek 36. 25. 27. Zach. 13.

Herein consists our *comfort*, 1. that Christ hath all *fulnesse* for us, and that our nature is perfect in him; 2. That Christ in our nature hath satisfied divine justice, not onely for the sinne of 1. 2.

Cap. 12. 3. our *lives*, but for the ſinne of our nature. And 3. that hee will never give over untill by his Spirit hee hath made *our nature* holy and pure as his owne, till hee hath taken away not onely the reigne, but the very life and being of 4. ſinne out of our hearts. 4. That to this end he leaves his Spirit and truth in the Church to the end of the world, that the ſeed of the Spirit may ſubdue the *ſeed of the ſerpent* in us, and that the Spirit may be a never-failing ſpring of all holy thoughts, deſires, and endeavours in us, and dry up the contrary iſſue and ſpring of corrupt nature.

And Chriſtians muſt remember when they are much annoyed with their corruptions, that it is not their particular caſe alone, but the condition of all Gods people, leſt they be diſcouraged by looking on the ugly deformed visage of old *Adam*: which affrighteth ſome ſo farre, that it makes them think, *No mans nature is ſo vile as theirs*; which were well if it tended to humiliation onely; but Sathan often abuſeth it towards diſcouragement and deſpe-

desperation. Many out of a misconceit think that corruption is greatest when they feele it most, whereas indeed, the lesse wee see it and lament it, the more it is. Sighes and groanes of the soule are like the *pores* of the body, out of which in diseased persons *sicke humours* breake forth, and so become lesse. The more we see and grieve for *pride*, which is an immediate issue of our corrupted nature, the lesse it is, because wee *see* it by a contrary grace; the more *sight* the more hatred, the more *hatred* of sinne the more love of grace, and the more *love* the more life, which the more lively it is, the more it is sensible of the contrary: upon every discovery and conflict corruption loses some ground, and grace gaines upon it. Cap. 12.

Cap. 13.

Cap. XIII.

Of Imagination, ſinne of it, and remedies for it.

§. 1.

Sinfulnes and vanity ſeated in the *imagination* is a cauſe of much diſquiet.

AND amongſt all the *faculties* of the ſoule Moſt of the *diſquiet* and unneceſſary *trouble* of our lives ariſes from the *vanity* and ill government of that power of the ſoule which wee call *imagination* and *opinion*, bordering betweene the ſenſes and our underſtanding; which is nothing elſe but a ſhallow apprehenſion of *good* or *evill* taken from the *ſenſes*: Now becauſe *outward* good or *evill* things agree or diſagree to the ſenſes, and the life of *ſenſe* is in us before the uſe of *reaſon*, and the delights of ſenſe are *preſent*, and pleaſing, and *ſutable* to our natures: thereupon the *imagination* ſetteth a great price upon ſenſible good things; and the *judgement* it ſelfe ſince *the fall*, untill it hath an higher light and ſtrength, yeeldeth to our *imagination*; hence it comes

to

to passe that the *best things*, if they bee attended with sensible inconveniences, as *want*, *disgrace* in the world, and such like, are misjudged for *evill* things; and the very worst things, if they bee attended with respect in the world, and *sensible* contentments, are *imagined* to be the greatest good: which appeares not so much in mens *words* (because they are ashamed to discover their *hidden* folly and atheisme) but the *lives* of people speake as much, in that particular choise which they make; Many there are who thinke it not onely a *vaine* but a *dangerous* thing to *serve God*, and a *base* thing to bee *awed* with *religious* respects, they count the waies that Gods people take, no better than *madnesse*, and that course which GOD takes in bringing men to heaven by a plaine publishing of *heavenly truths*, to be nothing but *foolishnesse*, and those people that regard it, are esteemed (as the *Pharisees* esteemed them that heard Christ) ignorant, base, and despicable persons; Hence arise all those false *prejudices* against the wayes of holinesse, Cap. 13.

Cap. 13. as they in the *Acts* were *shy* in entertaining the *truth*, becauſe it was *a way every where ſpoken againſt*. The doctrine of the Croſſe, hath the *croſſe* alwayes *following* it, which *imagination* counteth the moſt odious and bitter thing in the world.

Act. 28. 22.

This *imagination* of ours is become the ſeat of vanity, and thereupon of vexation to us, becauſe it apprehends a greater happineſſe in outward *good* things then there is, and a greater *miſerie* in outward *evill* things then indeed there is, and when experience ſhewes us that there is not *that good* in thoſe things which wee imagine to bee, but contrarily, wee find much *evill* in them which wee never expected, hereupon the ſoule cannot but be troubled. The life of many men, and thoſe not the meaneſt, is almoſt nothing elſe but a *fancie*; that which chiefly ſets their wits a work, and takes up moſt of their time, is how to pleaſe their owne *imagination*, which ſetteth up an *excellency* within it ſelfe, in compariſon of which it deſpiſeth all *true excellencie*, and thoſe things

Cap. 13.

things that are of moſt neceſſary conſequence indeed. Hence ſprings *ambition*, and the *vaine* of being great in the world; hence comes an unmeaſurable deſire of *abounding* in thoſe things which the world eſteemes highly of, there is in us *naturally* a competition and deſire of being *equall* or *above* others, in that which is generally thought to make us happy and eſteemed amongſt men; if wee bee not the *onely* men, yet wee will bee *ſome body* in the world, ſomething we will have to bee highly *eſteemed* for, wherein if wee be *croſſed*, we count it the greateſt miſery that can befall us.

And which is worſe, a corrupt deſire of being great in the *opinion* of others, creepes into the *profeſſion* of *religion*, if we live in thoſe places wherein it brings credit or gaine; men will ſacrifice their very lives for vaine glory: It is an evidence a man lives more to *opinion* and *reputation* of others, than to *Conſcience*, when his griefe is more for being diſappointed of that *approbation* which hee expects from men, than for

Cap. 13. for his miſcarriage towards GOD. It marres all in *religion*, when wee goe about heavenly things with earthly affections, and ſeeke not CHRIST in Chriſt, but the world: What is Popery but an artificiall frame of *mans braine* to pleaſe mens *imaginations* by outward ſtate and pompe of *Ceremonies*, like that *golden image* of *Nebuchadnezar*, wherein hee pleaſed himſelfe ſo, that to have uniformity in worſhipping the ſame, hee compelled all under paine of *death* to *fall downe* before it; this makes *ſuperſtitious* perſons alwaies cruell, becauſe ſuperſtitious deviſes are the brats of our owne imagination, which wee ſtrive for more than for the purity of Gods worſhip; hence it is likewiſe that ſuperſtitious perſons are reſtleſſe (as the woman of *Samaria*) in their owne ſpirits, as having no bottome, but *fancie* in ſtead of *faith*.

Dan. 3. 6.

§. 2.

How ſinful *imaginations* work upon the ſoule.

Now the reaſon why *imagination* works ſo upon the ſoule, is, becauſe it ſtirres up the *affections* anſwerable to the

the good or ill which it apprehends, and our affections ſtirre the humors of the body, ſo that oftentimes both our ſoules and bodies are *troubled* hereby. Cap. 13.

Things worke upon the ſoule in this order. 1. Some object is preſented. 2. Then it is apprehended by *imagination* as good and pleaſing, or as evill and hurtfull. 3. If *good*, the deſire is carried to it with delight: if *evill*, it is rejected with diſtaſt, and ſo our *affections* are ſtirred up ſutably to our apprehenſion of the object. 4. Affections ſtirre up the *ſpirits*. 5. The ſpirits raiſe the *humours*, and ſo the whole man becomes *moved* and oftentimes diſtempered; this falleth out by reaſon of the *Sympathy* betweene the *ſoule* and *body*, whereby what offendeth one redoundeth to the hurt of the other.

And wee ſee *conceived* troubles have the ſame effect upon us, as *true*. *Iacob* was as much troubled with the *imagination* of his *ſonnes death*, as if hee had been dead indeed; *imagination* though it bee an empty windy thing, yet it hath *reall* effects. *Superſtitious* perſons

Cap. 13. ſons are as much troubled for neglecting any *voluntarie* ſervice of *mans* invention, as if they had offended againſt the direct *commandement* of God: thus *ſuperſtition* breeds falſe feares, and *falſe* feare brings *true* vexation; it transformes God to an *Idoll*, imagining him to be pleaſed with whatſoever pleaſes our ſelves, when as wee take it ill that thoſe who are under *us* ſhould take direction from themſelves, and not from us, in that which may content us. *Superſtition* is very buſie, but all in vaine,
Mat. 15.9. *in vaine they worſhip mee* ſaith God; and how can it chooſe but vexe and diſquiet men, when they ſhall take a great deale of paines *in vaine*, and which is worſe, to diſpleaſe *moſt* in *that* wherein they thinke to pleaſe moſt. GOD blaſteth all deviſed ſervice with one
Eſay 1. 12. demand, *Who required theſe things at your hands?* It were better for us to aſke our ſelves this queſtion before hand, *Who required this? Why doe wee trouble our ſelves about that which we ſhall have no thanke for?* Wee ſhould not bring God downe to our owne *imagi-*

nations,

nations, but raiſe our imaginations up to God. Cap. 13.

Now *imagination* hurteth us, 1. By falſe repreſentations. 2. By preventing *reaſon*, and ſo uſurping a cenſure of things, before our *judgements* try them, whereas the office of *imagination* is to miniſter matter to our *underſtanding* to worke upon, and not to leade it, much leſſe miſleade it in any thing. 3. By forging matter out of it ſelfe without *ground*; the *imaginarie* grievances of our lives are more than the *reall*. 4. As it is an ill inſtrument of the underſtanding to deviſe *vanity* and *miſchiefe*.

§. 3.

The way to cure this malady in us, is, 1. To labour to bring theſe *riſings* of our ſoules into the obedience of Gods truth and Spirit; for *imagination* of it ſelfe, *if ungoverned*, is a *wilde*, and a *ranging* thing; it wrongs not onely the frame of Gods worke in us, ſetting the *baſer* part of a man above the *higher*, but it wrongs likewiſe the worke of

The firſt remedy for hurtfull imagina-tions.

2 Cor. 10. 5

Cap. 13. of God in the creatures and every thing elſe, for it ſhapes things as *it ſelfe* pleaſeth, it maketh *evill* good, if it pleaſeth the ſenſes; and *good* evill, if it be dangerous and diſtaſtfull to the outward man; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unſetled ſoule. As if it were a god, it *can tell* good and evill at its pleaſure, it ſets up and puls downe the price of what it liſteth: By reaſon of the *diſtemper* of imagination, the life of many is little elſe but a *dream*; Many *good* men are in a long dreame of miſery, and many *bad* men in as long a dreame of happineſſe, till the time of *awaking* come, and all becauſe they are too much led by *appearances*; and as in a *dreame* men are deluded with falſe joyes, and falſe feares: So here; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unſetled ſoule: therefore it is neceſſary that God by his *word* and *Spirit* ſhould erect a government in our hearts to *captivate* and order this licentious faculty.

2. 2. Likewiſe it is good to preſent *reall* things to the ſoule, as the *true* riches

riches, and *true* misery of a Christian, the *true* honour and dishonour, *true* beauty and deformity, the *true* nobleness and debasement of the soule; What ever is in the world, are but *shadowes* of things in comparison of those true *realties* which Religion affords; and why should wee vexe our selves about a *vaine shadow?* Cap. 13. Psal. 39.6.

The Holy Ghost to prevent further mischiefe by these outward things, gives a dangerous report of them, calling them *vanity*, *unrighteous Mammon*, *uncertaine riches*, *thornes*, yea *nothing*; because though they be not so in themselves, yet, our *imagination* over-valuing them, they prove so to us upon triall; Now knowledge that is bought by *tryall* is often deare bought, and therefore God would have us prevent this by a right *conceit* of things before hand, lest trusting to *vanity* wee *vanish* our selves, and trusting to *nothing* wee become *nothing* our selves, and which is worse, *worse* than *nothing*. Luke 15.9 Prov. 23.5.

3. Oppose serious *consideration* against vaine *imagination*, and because our 3.

Cap. 13. our imagination is prone to raiſe falſe *objects*, and thereby falſe *conceits*, and *diſcourſes* in us; Our beſt way herein is to propound *true* objects for the minde to worke upon; as, 1. to conſider the greatneſſe and goodneſſe of Almighty God, and his *love* to us in Chriſt. 2. the joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell. 3. The laſt and ſtrict *day of account*. 4. The vanity of all earthly things. 5. The uncertainty of our lives, &c. From the meditation of theſe truths, the ſoule will be prepared to have *right* conceits of things, and to diſcourſe upon true grounds of them, and thinke with it ſelf, that if theſe things be ſo *indeed*, then I muſt frame my life ſutable to theſe principles; hence ariſe *true affections* in the ſoule, true *feare* of God, true *love* and deſire after the beſt things, &c. The way to expell *wind* out of our bodies, is to take ſome wholeſome nouriſhment, and the way to expell *windy fancies* from the ſoule, is to feed upon ſerious truths.

4. Moreover, to the well ordering of this unruly *faculty*, it is neceſſary that

that our nature it ſelfe ſhould be *changed*, for as men *are* ſo they *imagine*, as the *treaſure of the heart is*, ſuch is that which comes from it; An *evill* heart cannot *thinke* well: before the heart be *changed* our judgement is *depraved* in regard of our *laſt end*, we ſeeke our *happineſſe* where it is not to be found, *Wickedneſſe* comes from the *wicked* as the Proverbe is. If wee had as large and as quick *apprehenſions* as Sathan himſelfe, yet if the reliſh of our will and affections be not *changed*, they will ſet the *imagination* a worke, to deviſe ſatisfaction to themſelves. For there is a mutuall working and refluxe betwixt the *will* and the *imagination*; the *imagination* ſtirres up the will, and as the *will* is affected, ſo imagination worketh.

Cap. 13.

Mat. 12. 35 *Mala mens, malus animus.*

1 Sam. 24. 13.

When the *Law* of God by the *Spirit* is ſo *written in our hearts*, that the *law* and our *hearts* become agreeable one to the other, then the ſoule is enclined and made plyable to every good thought: When the heart is once *taught of God* to love, it is the nature of this ſweet *affection* (as the Apoſtle ſaith) to

Cap. 13. 1 Cor. 13. 5. *thinke no evill* either of *God* or *man*, and not onely ſo, but it carries the bent of the whole ſoule with it to good, ſo that Mat. 22. 37. we *love God* not onely *with all our heart*, but *with all our minde*, that is, both with our *underſtanding* and *imagination*. Love is an affection full of *inventions*, and ſets the wit a worke to *deviſe* good things; therefore our chiefe care ſhould bee, that our *hearts* may be *circumciſed* and *purified* ſo, as they may be filled with the *love of God*, and then we ſhall finde this duty not onely *eaſie* but *delightfull* 2 King. 2. 20. unto us. The Prophet *healed* the *waters* by *caſting ſalt* into the *ſpring*, ſo the ſeaſoning of the *ſpring* of our actions ſeaſons *all*. And indeed what can bee expected from man whileſt hee is *vanity* but *vaine imaginations?* What can wee looke for from a *Viper* but *poyſon?* A Eſay 59 5. man naturally is either *weaving ſpiders webbs*, or *hatching Cockatrices egges*, that is, his heart is exerciſed either in *vanity* or *miſchiefe*, for not onely the frame of the *heart*, but what the heart *frameth* is Gen. 6. 5. evill continually. A wicked man that is beſotted with falſe *conceits*, will admit of

of no good thoughts to enter. Cap. 13. 5.

5. Even when wee are *good* and deviſe good things, yet there is ſtill ſome ſickneſſe of *fancie* remaining in the beſt of us, whereby wee worke trouble to our ſelves, and therefore it is neceſſary we ſhould labour to *reſtraine* and *limit* our fancie, and *ſtop theſe waters* at the *beginning*, giving no not the leaſt way thereunto. If it begins to grow *wanton*, tame the wildneſſe of it by faſtning it to the *Croſſe* of Chriſt, *whom wee have pierced with our ſinnes*, and amongſt other, with theſe *ſinnes* of our *ſpirits*, who hath *redeemed* us from our *vaine* thoughts and *converſations*; ſet before it the *conſideration* of the wrath of God, of death, and judgement, and the woefull eſtate of the damned, &c. and take it not off till thy heart be taken off from ſtraying from God; When it begins once to runne out to impertinencies, *confine* it to ſome certaine thing, and then upon examination wee ſhall finde it bring home ſome *hony* with it; otherwiſe it will bring us nothing but a *ſting* from the bitter remembrance of Zac. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 18.

Cap. 13. our former miſ-ſpent thoughts & time, which wee ſhould *redeeme* and fill up,

Luk. 19.47 with things that moſt *belong to our peace*. *Idleneſſe* is the houre of *temptation*, wherein Sathan joynes with our *imagination*, and ſets it about his owne work, to grinde his greeſe, for the ſoule as a Mill either grinds that which is put into it, or elſe works upon it ſelfe. *Imagination* is the *firſt wheele* of the ſoule, and if that move amiſſe, it ſtirres all the *inferiour wheeles* amiſſe with it; It ſtirres it *ſelfe*, and other powers of the ſoule are ſtirred by its motion; and therefore the well ordering of *this* is of the greater conſequence; For as the *imagination* conceiveth, ſo uſually the *judgement* concludeth, the *will* chuſeth, the *affections* are carried, and the *members* execute.

If it breake looſe (as it will ſoone runne ryot) yet give no conſent of the *will* to it; though it hath defiled the *memory*, yet let it not defile the *will*; though it be the *firſt borne* of the ſoule,

Bernard. yet let it not as *Ruben* aſcend unto the *fathers bed*, that is, our *will*, and defile that

that which ſhould be kept pure for the *Spirit* of Chriſt; reſolve to act nothing upon it, but croſſe it before it moves to the execution and practice of any thing: As in *ſickneſſe*, many times wee imagine (by reaſon of the corruption of our *taſte*) *Phyſick* to be ill for us, and thoſe meates which *nouriſh the diſeaſe* to be good, yet care of health makes us croſſe our owne *conceits*, and take that which fancie abhorres: So if we would preſerve *ſound* ſpirits, wee muſt conclude againſt *groundleſſe* imagination, and reſolve that whatſoever it ſuggeſts cannot be ſo, becauſe it croſſes the grounds both of *religion* and *reaſon*: And when wee finde *imagination* to deceive us in *ſenſible* things (as Melancholy perſons are ſubject to miſtake) we may well gather, that it will much more deceive us in our *ſpirituall condition*; And indeed ſuch is the incoherence, impertinencie, and unreaſonableneſſe of *imagination*, that men are oft *aſhamed* and *angry* with themſelves afterwards for giving the leaſt way to ſuch thoughts; and it is good to *chaſtiſe* Cap. 13.

Cap. 13. the ſoule for the ſame, that it may bee more *wary* for time to come; whileſt men are led with *imagination*, they worke not according to right rules preſcribed to men, but as other baſer *creatures*, in whom *phantaſie* is the chiefe ruling power, and therefore *thoſe* whoſe *will* is guided by their *fancies* live more like beaſts than men.

Wee allow a horſe to prannce and ſkip in a *paſture*, which if hee doth when he is once backt by the rider, wee count him an unruly and an unbroken jade, ſo howſoever in other creatures we allow *liberty* of *fancy*, yet, wee allow it not in man to friſk and rove at its pleaſure, becauſe in him it is to be bridled with *reaſon*.

6. 6. Eſpecially take heed of thoſe curſed *imaginations* out of which as of mother *roots* others ſpring forth; as queſtioning *Gods Providence*, and care of his children, his *juſtice*, his diſregarding of what is done here below, &c. *thoughts* of putting off our amendment for time to come, and ſo *bleſſing our ſelves* in an evill way; *thoughts* againſt the

the neceſſity of *exact* and *circumſpect walking* with God, &c. When theſe and ſuch like *principles* of *Satans* and the *fleſhes divinity* take place in our hearts, they block up the ſoule againſt the entrance of *ſoule ſaving* truths, and taint our whole converſation, which is either *good* or *evill*, as the *principles* are by which wee are guided, and as our *imagination* is, which lets in all to the ſoule. Cap. 13. Epheſ. 5. 15

The *Iewes in Ieremies* time were fore-ſtalled with *vaine imaginations* againſt ſound *repentance*, and therefore his counſell is, *Waſh thine heart O Ieruſalem, how long ſhall vaine thoughts lodge within thee?* Ier. 4. 14.

7. Fancie will the better bee kept within its due bounds, if wee conſider the principall uſe thereof; *Senſe* and *imagination* is *properly* to judge what is comfortable or uncomfortable, what is pleaſing or diſpleaſing to the outward man, (not what is *morally* or *ſpiritually* good or ill) and thus farre by the lawes of *nature* and *civility* wee are bound to give *fancie* contentment both 7.

Cap. 13. in our ſelves and others, as not to *ſpeak* or *doe* any thing uncomely, which may occaſion a *loathing* or *diſtaſt* in our converſe with men: and it is a matter of *conſcience* to make our lives as comfortable as may bee; as wee are bound to *love*, ſo wee are bound to uſe all helps that may make us *lovely*, and indeare us into the good affections of others: As wee are bound to give no offence to the *conſcience* of another, ſo to no *power* or *faculty* either of the outward or inward man of another: Some are taken off in their *affection* by a *fancie*, whereof they can give but little reaſon; and ſome are more careleſſe in giving offence in this kind, than ſtands with that Chriſtian *circumſpection* and mutuall *reſpect* which wee owe one to another; The Apoſtles rule is of large extent, *Whatſoever things are* not onely *true, and honeſt, and juſt*, but *whatſoever things are lovely, and of good report, &c. thinke of theſe things.* Yet our maine care ſhould bee to manifeſt our ſelves rather to mens *conſciences* than to their *imaginations*.

Phil 4.8.

8. It

8. It ſhould be our wiſedome likewiſe to place our ſelves in the beſt *conveniency* of all *outward helps* which may have a kinde working upon our *fancie*; and to take heed of the contrary, as *time, place,* and *objects, &c.* There bee good *houres,* and good *meſſengers* of GODS ſending, golden *opportunities,* wherein God uſes to give a meeting to his children, and *breathes* good thoughts into them. Even the wiſeſt and holieſt men, (as *David* and *Solomon, &c.*) had no further ſafety than they were carefull of well uſing all good advantages, and *ſequeſtring* themſelves from ſuch *objects* as had a working power upon them; by ſuffering their *ſoules* to bee led by their *fancies,* and their *hearts* to runne after their *eyes,* they betrayed and robbed themſelves of much grace and comfort, thereupon *Solomon* cries out with *griefe* and *ſhame* from his owne experience, *Vanitie of vanities, &c.* *Fancy* will take fire before wee bee aware. *Little* things are ſeeds of *great* matters; *Iob* knew this, and therefore *made a covenant with his eyes.* But *a fooles eyes*

Cap. 13. 8.

Eccleſ. 1. 2.

Job 31. 1.

Cap. 13. Pro. 17. 24.

eyes are in the *corners of the earth*, saith *Solomon*.

Preclara cogitatio.

Sometimes the miniſtring of ſome *excellent thought* from what we *heare* or *ſee*, proves a great advantage of ſpirituall good to the ſoule: Whileſt Saint *Auſtin* out of curioſity delighted to *heare* the *eloquence* of St. *Ambroſe*, hee was taken with the matter it ſelfe, ſweetly ſliding together with the words into his heart. Of later times, whileſt *Galeaceus Caracciolus* an *Italian* *Marqueſſe*, and *Nephew* to *Pope Paul* 5. was hearing *Peter Martyr reading* upon 1 *Corinths*, and ſhewing the deceiveableneſſe of mans judgement in ſpirituall things, and the efficacy of *divine truth* in thoſe that belong unto GOD, and further uſing a *ſimilitude* to this purpoſe; "If a man be walking afar "off, and ſee people dancing together, "and *heare* no noiſe of the *muſicke*, hee "judges them *fooles* and *out of their* "*wits*; but when hee comes *neerer* and "heares the *muſicke*, and ſees that eve- "ry motion is exactly done by art; "Now he changes his minde, and is ſo "taken

Rare in his life.

Cap. 13.

"taken up with the ſweet agreement "of the *geſture*, and the *muſicke*, that "he is not onely delighted therewith, "but deſirous to joyne himſelfe in the "number; ſo it falls out (ſaith hee) "with men; Whileſt they looke upon "the outward carriage and converſa- "tion of Gods people, and ſee it *diffe-* "*ring* from others, they thinke them "*fooles*; but when they looke more nar- "rowly into their courſes, and ſee a "gracious *harmony* betwixt their *lives* "and the *Word* of God, then they be- "ginne to be in love with the *beauty of* "*holineſſe*, and joyne in conformity of "holy obedience with thoſe they ſcor- "ned before. This *Similitude* wrought ſo with this Noble-man, that he began from that time forward to ſet his mind to the ſtudy of heavenly things.

One ſeaſonable truth falling upon a prepared heart, hath oftentimes a ſweet and ſtrong operation; *Luther* confeſſeth that having heard a grave Divine *Staupicius* ſay, that *that is kind repentance which begins from the love of God*, ever after that time the practice of

Cap. 13.

Doctrina prædeſtinationis incipit à vulneribus Chriſti.

of repentance was ſweeter to him. This ſpeech of his likewiſe tooke well with *Luther*, that in doubts of *predeſtination wee ſhould begin from the wounds of Chriſt*, that is, from the ſenſe of Gods love to us in Chriſt, we ſhould ariſe to the grace given us in *election before the world was*.

2 Tim. 1. 9.

The putting of *lively* colours upon *common* truths hath oft a ſtrong working both upon the *fancy*, and our will and *affections*: the ſpirit is *refreſhed* with *freſh* things, or old truths *refreſhed*; this made the Preacher *ſeeke* to finde out *pleaſing* and *acceptable words*; and our Saviour CHRISTS manner of *teaching* was, by a lively *repreſentation* to mens *fancies*, to teach them heavenly truths in an earthly ſenſible manner; and indeed what doe wee *ſee* or *heare* but will yeeld matter to a holy heart to raiſe it ſelfe higher?

Eccleſ. 12. 10.

We ſhould make our *fancie* ſerviceable to us in ſpirituall things, and take advantage by any *pleaſure*, or *profit*, or *honour* which it preſents our thoughts withall, to thinke thus with our ſelves,

What

What is this to the *true* honour, and to those *enduring* pleasures, &c? And seeing God hath condescended to represent *heavenly* things to us under *earthly* termes, wee should follow Gods dealing herein: God *represents* heaven to us, under the terme of a *banquet*, and of a *kingdome*, *&c.* our *union* with Christ under the terme of a *mariage*, yea Christ himselfe, under the name of whatsoever is *lovely* or *comfortable* in heaven or earth. So the Lord sets out *Hell* to us by whatsoever is terrible or tormenting. Here is a large field for our imagination to walke in, not onely without *hurt*, but with a great deale of spirituall *gaine*; If the wrath of a *King* bee as the *roaring* of a Lion, what is the wrath of the *King of Kings*? If *fire* bee so terrible, what is *hell* fire? If a darke dungeon be so lothsome, what is that *eternall* dungeon of darknesse? If a *feast* bee so pleasing, what is the *continuall feast of a good conscience*? If the meeting of *friends* be so comfortable, what will our meeting together in heaven be? The *Scripture* by such like termes

Cap. 13.

Luk 10.32

Pro. 15.15.

Cap. 13. termes would help our *faith* and *fancie* both at once; a ſanctified *fancie* will make every creature a *ladder to heaven*. And becauſe childhood and *youth* are ages of *fancie*, therefore it is a good way to inſtill into the hearts of children betimes, the *loving* of good, and the *ſhunning* of evill, by ſuch like repreſentations as agree with their *fancies*, as to hate *hell* under the repreſentation of fire and darkneſſe, &c. Whileſt the ſoule is joyned with the body, it hath not onely a *neceſſary* but a *holy* uſe of *imagination*, and of *ſenſible* things whereupon our imagination worketh; what is the uſe of the *Sacraments*, but to help our *ſoules* by our *ſenſes*, and our *faith* by *imagination*; as the ſoule receives much *hurt* from imagination, ſo it may have much good thereby.

But yet it ought not to *invent* or *deviſe* what is good and true in religion, here *fancy* muſt yeeld to faith, and *faith* to divine revelation; the *things* we *be-*
1 Cor. 2 9. *leeve* are ſuch, as *neither eye hath ſeene, nor eare heard*, neither *came into the heart of man* by *imagination* ſtirred up from any

any thing which we have *ſeene* or *heard*; they are above not onely *imagination*, but *reaſon* it ſelfe, in *men* and *Angels*: But after God hath revealed ſpirituall truthes, and *faith* hath apprehended them, then *imagination* hath uſe while the ſoule is joyned with the body, to *colour* divine truthes, and make lightſome what *faith* beleeves; for inſtance, it doth not *deviſe* either *heaven* or *hell*, but when God hath revealed them to us, our *fancy* hath a fitneſſe of enlarging our conceits of them, even by reſemblance from things in nature, and that without danger; becauſe the joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell are ſo great, that all the repreſentations which nature affords us, fall ſhort of them. Cap. 13.

Imagination hath likewiſe ſome uſe in *religion*, by putting *caſes* to the ſoule, as when we are tempted to any unruly action, we ſhould think with our ſelves, What would I doe if ſome holy grave perſon whom I much reverence ſhould behold me? Whereupon the ſoule may eaſily aſcend *higher*; God ſees me, and my

Cap. 13. my owne *conscience* is ready to witnesse against me, &c.

It helps us also in taking benefit by the example of other men; Good things are best learned, by others expressing of them to our view; the very sight often, (nay the very thought) of a *good man* doth good, as representing to our soules some good thing which we affect; which makes *Histories* and the lively *Characters* and expressions of *vertues* and *vices* usefull to us. The sight, yea the very reading of the suffering of the *Martyrs* hath wrought such a hatrred of that *persecuting* Church, as hath done marvellous good; the sight of justice executed upon malefactors, works a greater hatred of sinne in men than naked precepts can doe; So outward *pompe* & *state* in the world, doth further that awefull respect due to *authority*, &c.

Est aliquid quod ex magno viro vel tacente proficias.

9. Lastly, it would much availe for the well ordering of our *thoughts*, to set our soules in order every *morning*, and to strengthen and perfume our spirits with some gracious *meditations*, especially

ally of the chiefe end and scope wherefore we live here, and how every thing wee *doe*, or *befalls* us, may be reduced and ordered to further the maine. The *end* of a Christian is glorious, and the oft thoughts of it will raise and enlarge the soule, and set it on worke to study how to make all things serviceable thereunto. It is a thing to be lamented that a Christian borne for heaven, having the *price* of his *high calling* set before him, and matters of that *weight* and *excellencie* to exercise his heart upon, should be taken up with *trifles*, and fill both his *head* and heart with *vanity* and *nothing*, as all earthly things will prove ere long; and yet if many mens *thoughts* and *discourses* were distilled, they are so *frothy* that they would hardly yeeld one drop of true comfort. Cap. 13.

§. 4.

Oh but (say some) thoughts and imaginations are *free*, and wee shall not be accountable for them. *Object.*

This is a false plea, for God hath a soveraignty over the *whole* soule, and his *Answ.* Imaginations and thoughts not free.

Cap. 13. his *law* bindes the whole *inward* and *outward* man; as wee desire our whole man should be *saved* by Christ, so wee must yeeld up the whole man to be *governed* by him; and it is the effect of the dispensation of the *Gospell*, accompanied with the *Spirit*, to captivate *whatsoever* is in man unto Christ, and to
2 Cor. 10. 5 *bring downe* all *high towring imaginations* that exalt themselves against Gods *Spirit*. There is a divinity in the word of God powerfully unfolded, which will convince our soules of the sinfulnes of *naturall imaginations*, as we see in the *Ideot*, *Corinth.* 14. who seeing himselfe *laid open* before himself, cryed out,
1 Cor. 14. 25. that *God was in the speaker*.

There ought to be in man a conformity to the truth and goodnesse of things, or else 1. wee shall *wrong* our
1. owne soules with false *apprehensions*,
2. and 2. the creature, by putting a fashion upon it otherwise then God hath
3. made, and 3. we shall wrong God himselfe the *Author* of goodnesse, who cannot have his true glory but from a right apprehension of things as they are; what

what a wrong is it to men when wee shall take up false prejudices against them without ground? and so suffer our *conceits* to be invenomed against them by unjust *suspitions*, and by this meanes deprive our selves of all that good which we might receive by them; for our *nature* is apt to judge, and accept of things as the *persons* are, and not of persons according to the *things* themselves: this *faculty* exercises a tyrannie in the soule, setting up and pulling downe whom it will. *Iob* judged his friends *altogether vaine*, because they went upon a vaine *imagination* and *discourse*, judging him to be an *hypocrite*, which could not but adde much to his affliction: when men take a toy in their head against a person or place, they are ready to reason as *hee* did, *Can any good come out of Nazareth?* Cap. 13. Job 27.12. Ioh.6 46.

It is an indignity for men to be led with *surmises* and *probabilities*, and so to passe a rash judgement upon *persons* and *things*: Oftentimes *falshood* hath a fairer glosse of probability than *truth*, and *vices* goe masqued under the ap-

Cap. 13. *Similitudo mater errorum.*

pearance of *vertue*, whereupon *seeming likenesse* breeds a mistake of one thing for another; and Sathan oftentimes casts a mist before our *imagination*, that so wee might have a mishapen conceit of things; by a spirit of *elusion* he makes *worldly* things appeare bigger to us, and *spirituall* things lesser than indeed they are; and so by sophisticating of things our affections come to be misled. Imagination is the *wombe*, and Sathan the *father* of all monstrous *conceptions* and disordered *lusts*, which are well called *deceitfull lusts*, and *lusts of ignorance*, foolish and noysome lusts, because they both spring from errour and folly, and lead unto it.

Eph. 4. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

We see even in *Religion* it selfe, how the *world* (together with the helpe of *the god of the world*) is led away, if not to *worship images*, yet to worship the image of their owne *fancie*; And where the truth is most *professed*, yet people are prone to *fancie* to themselves such a breadth of *Religion*, as will altogether leave them comfortlesse, when things shall appeare in their true colours; they will

will *conceit* to embrace *truth* without *hatred of the world*, and *Christ* without his *crosse*, and a *godly life* without *persecution*, they would pull a *rose* without *pricks*; Which though it may stand with their owne base ends for a while, yet will not hold out in times of *change*, when sicknesse of body and trouble of minde shall come; *Empty* conceits are too weake to encounter with reall griefes. Cap. 13.

Some thinke Orthodoxe and right *opinions* to bee a plea for a *loose* life, whereas there is no ill course of life but springs from some false opinion. God will not onely call us to an account how we have *believed*, *disputed*, and *reasoned*, &c. but how we have *lived*. Our care therefore should bee to build our *profession* not on seeming *appearances*, but upon sound *grounds*, that the gates of hell cannot prevaile against. The hearts of many are so vaine, that they delight to be blowne up with *flattery*, because they would have their *imagination* pleased (yea even when they cannot but know themselves abused,) and

Cap. 13. are grieved to have their *windy* bladder pricked, and so to bee put out of their *conceited* happinesse. Others out of a *tediousnesse* in serious and setled thoughts entertaiue every thing as it is offered to them at the first blush, and suffer their imaginations to carry them presently thereunto without further judging of it: the *will* naturally loves variety and change, and our *imagination* doth it service herein, as not delighting to fixe long upon any thing; hereupon men are contented both in *religion*, and in *common* life to be misled with prejudices upō shallow grounds. Whēce it is that the best *things* and *persons* suffer much in the world, the power and practice of Religion is hated under odious names, and so condemned before it is understood; Whence wee see a necessity of getting spirituall *Eye-salve*, for without true *knowledge* the heart cannot be *good*.

Prov. 19. 2.

It is just with God that those who take *liberty* in their *thoughts* should bee given up to their *owne imaginations*, to delight in them, and to be out of conceit

ceit with the beſt things, and ſo to reape the fruit of their *owne* waies. Nay, even the beſt of Gods people, if they take liberty herein, God will let looſe their *imagination* upon themſelves, and ſuffer them to bee intangled and vexed with their owne hearts; Thoſe that give way to their *imaginations*, ſhew what their *actions* ſhould be, if they dared; for if they forbeare doing evill out of *conſcience*, they ſhould as well forbeare *imagining* evill; for *both* are alike *open* to God and hatefull to him; and therefore oft where there is no conſcience of the *thought*, God gives men up to the *deed*. The greateſt, and hardeſt worke of a Chriſtian is leaſt in ſight, which is the well ordering of his *heart*; ſome buildings have moſt workmanſhip under ground; it is our ſpirits *that God who is a Spirit* hath moſt communion withall; and the leſſe freedome wee take to ſinne here, the more argument of our ſincerity, becauſe there is no *lawes* to binde the inner man but the law of the *Spirit of grace*, whereby wee are *a law to our* Cap. 13. Ioh. 4. 24.

Cap. 13. *ſelves.* A good Chriſtian begins his repentance where his ſinne begins, *in his thoughts*, which are the next iſſue of his heart. God counts it an honour when wee regard his *all-ſeeing eye* ſo much, as that wee will not take liberty to our ſelves in that which is offenſive to him, no not in our *hearts*, wherein no creature can hinder us; It is an argument that the *Spirit* hath ſet up a *kingdome* and *order* in our hearts, when our ſpirits riſe within us againſt any thing that lifts it ſelfe up againſt goodneſſe.

§. 5.

Object. Many flatter themſelves, from an *impoſſibility* of ruling their *imaginations*, and are ready to lay all upon *infirmity and naturall weakneſſe, &c.*

Anſw. Not impoſſible to rule the imagination, and how. But ſuch muſt know that if wee bee ſound Chriſtians, the *Spirit* of GOD will enable us to doe all things (Evangelically) that wee are *called unto*, if we give way without checke to the motions thereof; where the Spirit is, it is ſuch a *light*, as diſcovers not onely dunghills, but *motes* themſelves, even

light

light and *flying imaginations*, and abaſeth the ſoule for them, and by degrees purgeth them out; and if they preſſe (as they are as buſie as flies in Summer) yet a good heart will not owne them, nor allow himſelfe in them, but caſts them off, as hot water doth the ſcumme, or as the ſtomacke doth that which is noyſome unto it, they finde not that entertainement *here* which they have in carnall hearts, where the ſcumme ſoakes in; which are *ſtewes* of *uncleane* thoughts, *ſhambles* of *cruell* and bloody thoughts, *Exchanges* and *ſhops* of *vaine* thoughts, a very *forge* and *myne* of *falſe*, *politicke*, and *undermining* thoughts, yea often a little *hell* of confuſed and blacke imaginations. There is nothing that more moveth a godly man to renew his intereſt every day in the perfect righteouſneſſe and obedience of his *Saviour*, than theſe ſinfull *ſtirrings* of his ſoule, when hee findes ſomething in himſelfe alwaies *inticing* and *drawing* away his heart from God, and intermingling it ſelfe with his beſt performances. Even *good* thoughts Cap. 13.

Cap. 13.

thoughts are troubleſome if they come *unſeaſonably*, and weaken our exact performance of duty.

§. 6.

Miſconceits about imagination, to be avoided.

But here ſome miſconceits muſt bee taken heed of.

1. As wee muſt take heed that wee account not our *imaginations* to be *religion*; So we muſt not account *true religion*, and the *power of godlineſſe* to bee a matter of *imagination onely*; as if *holy men* troubled themſelves more than needs, when they ſtand upon *religion* and *conſcience*, ſeeking to *approve* themſelves *to God in all things*, and indeavouring (ſo farre as frailty will permit) to *avoid all appearances of evill*. Many men are ſo ſerious in *vanities*, and reall in *trifles*, that they count *all*, which dote not upon ſuch *outward* excellencies as they doe (becauſe the *Spirit* of GOD hath revealed to them things of a *higher nature*) to be *fantaſticks* and *humorous* people, and ſo impute the worke of the *Spirit* to the *fleſh*, *Gods* worke to *Satan*, which comes neare unto blaſphemy: they

1.

1 Theſ. 5. 22.

they *imagine* good men to be led with vaine *conceits*, but good men *know* them to bee so led. Not onely St. *Paul*, but CHRIST himselfe, were counted *besides themselves*, when they were earnest for God and the soules of his people. But there is enough in *Religion* to beare up the soule against all *imputations* laid upon it: the true *children of wisdome* are alwaies able to justifie their *Mother*, and the conscionable practice of *holy duties* is founded upon such solid *grounds* as shall hold out when heaven and earth shall vanish. Cap. 13. Act 26.24. Mat. 11.19

2. Wee must know that as there is great danger in false *conceits* of the way to heaven, when we make it *broader* than it is, for by this meanes wee are like men going over a bridge, who thinke it broader than it is, but being deceived by some *shadow*, sinke downe, and are suddenly drowned; So men mistaking the strait way to life, and trusting to the *shadow* of their owne *imagination*, fall into the bottomlesse pit of hell before they are aware. In like manner the danger is great in making 2.

Cap. 13. king the way to heaven *narrower* than indeed it is, by weake and superstitious *imaginations*, making more sinnes than God hath made. The *Wisemans* counsell is that we should not make our
Eccle.7.17 selves *over wicked*, nor *be foolisher than we are*, by devising more sins in our *imagination*, than we are guilty of.

It is good in this respect, to know our *Christian liberty*, which being one of the fruits of Christs death, wee cannot neglect the same, without much wrong not onely to our selves, but to the rich bounty and goodnesse of God. So that the due rules of limitation bee observed, from *authority*, *piety*, *sobriety*, *needlesse offence* of others, &c. wee may with better leave use all those *comforts* which God hath given to refresh us in the way to *heaven*, than refuse them; the care of the outward man bindes conscience so farre, as that wee should neglect nothing which may helpe us in a cheerefull serving of GOD, in our places, and tend to the due honour of our bodies which are the *temples of the*
1 Cor.3. 16, 17. *Holy Ghost*, and companions with our soules

soules in all performances. So that under this pretence wee take not too much liberty to satisfie the lusts of the *body*. Intemperate use of the creatures is the nurse of all passions: because our spirits which are the soules instruments, are hereby inflamed and disturbed; it is no wonder to see an intemperate man transported into any *passion*. Cap. 13.

3. Some out of their *high* and *ayery* imaginations, (and out of their *iron* and *flinty* Philosophy) will needs think *outward* good and ill, together with the *affections* of griefe and delight stirred up thereby, to bee but opinions and *conceits* of good and evill onely, not *true* and *really* so founded in *nature*, but taken up of our selves: But though our *fancy* be ready to conceit a greater hurt in *outward* evils than indeed there is (as in *poverty*, *paine* of *body*, *death* of *friends*, &c.) yet wee must not deny them to bee *evils*: that *wormewood* is bitter, it is not a conceit onely, but the *nature* of the thing it selfe, yet to abstaine from it altogether for the *bitternesse* 3.

Cap. 13. *neſſe thereof* is a hurtfull *conceit*. That *honey* is ſweet, it is not a *conceit* onely, but the *naturall quality* of it is ſo; yet out of a taſte of the *ſweetneſſe*, to think wee cannot take too much of it, is a *miſconceit* paid home with loathſome bitterneſſe. Outward good and outward evill and the affections of *delight* and *ſorrow* riſing thence, are *naturally* ſo, and depend not upon our opinion. This were to offer violence to *nature*, and to take *man* out of *man*, as if hee were not *fleſh* but *ſteele*; Univerſall experience from the ſenſibleneſſe of our *nature* in any *outward grievance*, is ſufficient to damne this *conceit*.

The way to *comfort* a man in *griefe*, is not to tell him that it is onely a *conceit* of evill, and no *evill* indeed that he *ſuffers*; this kinde of learning will not downe with him, as being contrary to his preſent *feeling*; but the way is, to yeeld unto him that there is cauſe of *grieving*, though not of *over-grieving*, and to ſhew him grounds of *comfort* ſtronger than the *griefe* he ſuffers. Wee ſhould weigh the *degrees* of evill in a right

right ballance, and not suffer *fancie* to make them greater than they are; So as that for *obtaining* the greatest outward *good*, or *avoiding* the greatest outward *ill* of *suffering*, wee should give way to the least *evill of sinne*. This is but a *policy* of the *flesh* to take away the *sensiblenesse* of *evill*, that so those *checks* of *conscience* and *repentance* for *Sinne*, which is oft occasioned thereby, might be taken away; that so men may goe on enjoying a *stupid* happinesse, never laying any thing to *heart*, nor *afflicting* their soules, untill their consciences awaken in the place of the damned, and then they feele that griefe returne upon them for ever, which they laboured to put away when it might have beene seasonable to them. Cap. 13.

§. 7.

I have stood the longer upon this, because *Sathan* and his *instruments* by bewitching the *imagination* with false *appearances*, misleadeth not onely the *world*, but troubleth the peace of men *taken out of the world*, whose estate is laid This a very pertinent doctrine, and why.

Cap. 13.

laid up safe in Christ, who (notwithstanding) passe their few dayes here in an uncomfortable, wearisome, and unnecessary *sadnesse of spirit*, being kept in ignorance of their happy condition by Sathans *jugling* and their own mistakes, and so come to heaven before they are aware. Some againe passe their dayes in a golden *dreame*, and drop into *hell* before they thinke of it; but it is farre better to dreame of *ill*, and when wee awake to finde it but a *dreame*, than to dreame of some great *good*, and when we awake to find the contrary.

Lasa phantasia.

As the distemper of the *fancie* disturbing the act of reason, oftentimes breeds madnesse in regard of civill conversation; So it breeds likewise *spirituall* madnesse, carrying men to those things, which if they were in their right wits they would utterly abhorre; therefore wee cannot have too much care upon what wee fixe our thoughts; And what a glorious discovery is there of the excellencies of *Religion* that would even ravish an *Angell*, which may raise up, exercise, and fill our hearts?

We

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We see our *fancie* hath so great a force in naturall conceptions, that it oft sets a *marke* and *impression* upon that which is *conceived* in the *wombe*. So likewise strong and *holy* conceits of things (having a divine vertue accompanying of them,) transforme the soule, and breed spirituall impressions answerable to our spirituall apprehensions. It would prevent many *crosses*, if we would conceive of things as they are; When *trouble* of minde, or *sickenesse* of body, and *death* it selfe commeth, what will remaine of all that *greatnesse* which filled our *fancies* before? *then* we can *judge* soberly, and *speake* gravely of things. The best way of happinesse, is not to *multiply* honours or riches, &c. but to *cure* our conceits of things, and then we cannot be very much cast downe with any thing befalls us here.

Therefore when any thing is presented to our soules, which wee see is ready to worke upon us; wee should aske of our selves, upon what ground wee entertaine such a conceit, whether we shall have the same judgement

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after we have yeelded to it as now wee have? and whether wee will have the same judgement of it in *sickneſſe* and *death*, and at the day of *reckoning* as we have for the preſent? That which is of it ſelfe evill, is *alwayes* ſo at one time as well as another; if the time will come, when wee ſhall thinke thoſe things to be vaine, which *now* we are ſo eagerly ſet upon, as if there were ſome great good in them; Why ſhould wee not thinke ſo of them *now*, when as the reforming of our judgement may doe us good, rather than to be led on with a *pleaſing* error untill that time, wherein the ſight of our error will fill our hearts with horror and ſhame, without hope of ever changing our condition.

Here therefore is a ſpeciall uſe of theſe Soliloquies, to awake the *ſoule*, and to ſtirre up *reaſon* caſt aſleepe by Sathans *charmes*, that ſo ſcattering the *clouds* through which things ſeeme otherwiſe then they are, wee may diſcerne and judge of things according to their true and conſtant nature; Demand of thy ſoule, Shall I alwayes bee of

of this minde? Will not the time come when this will prove bitternesse in the end? Shall I redeeme a *short* contentment with *lasting* sorow? Is my Judge of my mind? Will not a time come when all things shall appeare as they are? Is this according to the rule, &c? Cap. 13.

To conclude therfore, whereas there be divers *principles* of mens actions, as 1. *naturall inclination*, inclining us to some courses more than others, 2. *custome*, which is *another nature* in us, 3. *imagination*, apprehending things upon shallow grounds; from whence springs *affectation*, whereby wee desire glory in things above our own strength and measure, and make shew of *that*, the truth whereof is wanting in us, 4. *true judgement*, discerning the true reasons of things, 5. *Faith*, which is a spirituall *principle* planted in the soule, apprehending things above reason, and raising us up to conceive of all things as GOD hath discovered them. Now a sound Christian should not bee *lightly* led with those first *common grounds* of naturall *inclination*, *custome*, *opinion*, &c. but

Divers principles of mans actions.
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but by *judgement* inlightned, advanced, and guided by *faith*. And wee must take heed wee suffer not things to passe suddenly from *imagination* to *affection*, without asking advice of our *judgement*, and *faith* in the way, whose office is, to weigh things in Gods *ballance*, and thereupon to accept, or refuse them.

CAP. XIV.

Of help by others. Of true comforters, and their graces. Method. Ill successe.

§. 1.

There is a help for us against troubles in others.

BUt because we are subject to *favour* and *flatter* our selves, it is wisedome to take the benefit of a second selfe, (that is) a well chosen friend *living* or *dead*, (books I meane,) which will speak truly without flattery of our estates. *A friend is made for the time of Adversity*, and *two are better than one*; for by this meanes our troubles are *divided*, and so more easily borne. The very presence of a true hearted friend yeelds often ease to our griefe. Of all *friends*, those that

Pro. 17. 17.

that by office are to ſpeak a word to a weary ſoule, are moſt to be regarded, as ſpeaking to us in Chriſts ſtead. Oftentimes (eſpecially in our owne caſe) wee are blinded and benighted with *paſſion*, and then the judgement of a friend is clearer. *Living* friends have a three-fold priviledge: 1. their advice is *ſutable*, and fit to our preſent occaſion, they can meet with our *grievance*, ſo cannot books ſo well. 2. what comes from a *living* friend, comes *lively*, as helped by his ſpirit. 3. in regard of our ſelves, what they ſay is apprehended with more eaſe, and leſſe plodding and bent of minde; There is ſcarce any thing wherein we ſee God more in favour towards us, than in our *friends*, and their ſeaſonable ſpeeches; our hearts being naturally very *falſe* and willingly *deceived*. God often gives us up to be miſled by men, *not* according to *his*, but *our owne* naughty hearts. As men *are*, ſuch are their *Counſellors*, for ſuch they *will* have, and ſuch God lets them have. Men whoſe *wills* are ſtronger than their *wits*, who are wedded to

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Cap. 14. their *owne* wayes, are more pleased to heare that which complies with their *inclinations*, than a harsh truth which crosses them; this presages ruine, because they are not *counsellable*: wherefore GOD suffers them to bee led through a *fooles paradise* to a true *prison*, as men that will neither heare themselves nor others who would doe them good against their wills; It was
1 Sam. 2. 25 a signe God would destroy *Elies sonnes* when they would heare no *counsell*;
Pro. 14. 14. GOD *fills* such men with their *owne wayes*. Men in great place often in the abundance of all things else, want the benefit of a *true friend*, because under pretence of *service* of them men carry their *owne ends*; as they flatter *themselves*, so they are flattered by *others*, and so robbed of the true judgement of themselves. Of all spirituall judgements this is the heaviest, for men to be given up to such a measure of *selfe-willnesse*, and to refuse spirituall *balme* to heale them, usually such *perish without remedy*, because to be *wilfully* miserable is to bee *doubly* miserable, for it

Ides amicus deest qui à nihil deest.

Prov. 29. 1.

addes

addes to our misery, that we brought it *willingly* upon our selves. Cap. 14.

It is a course that will have a blessing attending it, for *friends* to joyne in *league* one to watch over another, and observe each others wayes. It is an usuall course for Christians to joyne together in other holy duties, as *hearing*, *receiving* of the *Sacrament*, *prayer*, *&c.* but this fruit of holy *communion* which ariseth from a *mutuall* observing one another is much wanting; whence it is that so many *droope*, so many are so *unchearfull* in the wayes of God, and lie groaning under the *burden* of many *cares*, and are battered with so many temptations, &c. because they are left onely to their *owne* spirits. What an unworthy thing is it, that wee should pitty a *beast* over-loaden, and yet take no pitty of a *brother?* whereas there is no living member of Christ but hath *spirituall love* infused into him, and some *ability* to comfort others. *Dead* stones in an *Arch* uphold one another, and shall not *living?* It is the worke of an *Angell* to *comfort*, nay, it is the office

Cap. 14. of the *Holy Ghoſt* to be a *Comforter*, not onely immediately, but by breathing comfort into our *hearts* together with the comfortable *words* of others; thus *one* friend becomes an *Angell*, nay a *God* to *another*; and there is a ſweet ſight of God in the face of a *friend*; for though the comfort given by Gods *Meſſengers* bee ordinarily moſt effectuall, as the bleſſing of Parents (who are in Gods roome) is more effectuall than the bleſſing of others upon their children: yet God hath promiſed a bleſſing to the offices of *Communion of Saints* performed by one private man towards another. Can we have a greater incouragement than under God to be gainer of a ſoule, which is as much in Gods eſteeme as if we ſhould gaine a world? *Spirituall* almes are the *beſt* almes; *mercie* ſhewed to the *ſoules* of men is the *greateſt mercie*; and wiſedome in winning of *ſoules* is the greateſt wiſedome in the world, becauſe the *ſoule* is eſpecially the man, upon the goodneſſe of which, the happineſſe of the *whole man* depends: What ſhining

ning and flouriſhing Chriſtians ſhould wee have if theſe duties were performed? As wee have a portion in the *Communion of Saints*, ſo wee ſhould labour to have *humility* to take good, and *wiſedome* and *love* to doe good. A Chriſtian ſhould have *feeding* lips, and a *healing* tongue; the *leaves* the very words *of the tree of righteouſneſſe* have a curing vertue in them. Cap. 14.

Some will ſhew a great deale of *humanity* in comforting others, but little *Chriſtianity*; for as *kinde men* they will utter ſome *cheerefull words*, but as *Chriſtians* they want wiſedome from above to ſpeake a gracious *word* in *ſeaſon*: Nay ſome there are, who hinder the ſaving working of any affliction upon the hearts of others, by unſeaſonable and *unſavoury* diſcourſes, either by ſuggeſting falſe *remedies*, or elſe diverting men to falſe *contentments*, and ſo become ſpirituall *traitors* rather than *friends*, taking part with their worſt *enemies*, their *luſts* and *wills*. Happy is hee that in his *way* to heaven meeteth with a chearefull and ſkilfull *guide* and *fellow-*

Cap. 14. *fellow-traveller*, that carrieth *cordials* with him against all faintings of spirit: It is a part of our *wisdome to salvation* to make choice of such a one as may further us in our *way*; An *indifferency* for any *company* shewes a *dead* heart; where the life of grace is, it is sensible of all advantages and disadvantages: How many have beene refreshed by *one* short, apt, savoury speech? which hath begotten, as it were, new spirits in them.

In ancient times (as wee see in the Iob 2.12. Story of *Iob*) it was the custome of friends to meet together, to comfort Iob 6.14. those that were in misery, and *Iob* takes it for granted, that *to him that is afflicted pitty should be shewed from his friends:* for besides the presence of a friend which hath some influence of 1. comfort in it; 1. The discovery of his *loving affection* hath a cherishing 2. sweetnesse in it. 2. The expression of love in *reall* comforts and services by supplying any outward want of the party troubled, prevailes much; thus Christ made way for his comforts to

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the ſoules of men, by ſhewing outward kindneſſe to their *bodies: Love* with the ſenſible *fruits* of it, prepareth for any wholeſome counſell. 3. After this, *wholeſome words* carry a ſpeciall cordiall vertue with them, eſpecially when the Spirit of God in the affectionate ſpeaker joynes with the *word* of *comfort*, and thereby cloſeth with the heart of a troubled patient: when all theſe concenter and meet together in one, then is comfort *ſealed* up to the ſoule. The childe in *Elizabeths* wombe ſprang at the preſence and ſalutation of *Mary*; the ſpeech of one hearty friend cannot but revive the ſpirits of another; Sympathy hath a ſtrange force, as wee ſee in the ſtrings of an Inſtrument, which being played upon (as they ſay) the ſtrings of another inſtrument are alſo moved with it. After love hath once *kindled* love, then the heart being melted, is fit to receive any impreſſion; unleſſe *both* pieces of the iron bee red *hot* they will not joyne together; *two* ſpirits warmed with the *ſame heat* will eaſily ſoader together.

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3.

Luk. 1. 41.

§. 2.

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§. 2.

Graces necessary in dealing with another.

In him that shall stay the minde of another there had need to bee an excellent *temper* of many graces; as,

1. *Knowledge* of the grievance, together with *wisedome* to speake a word in season, and to conceale that which may set the cure backwards. 2. *Faithfulnesse* with *liberty*, not to conceale any thing which may bee for his good, though against present liking. The very life and soule of *friendship* stands in *freedome*, tempered with wisedome and faithfulnesse. 3. *Love* with compassion and patience *to beare all*, and *hope all*, and *not to be easily provoked* by the waywardnesse of him wee deale with. Short spirited men are not the best comforters: God himselfe is said to *beare with the manners of his people in the wilderness*: It is one thing to *beare* with a wise sweet *moderation* that which may be *borne*, and another thing to *allow* or approve that which is not to be *approved* at all. Where these graces are in the *speaker*, and apprehended so

1. 2.

1 Cor. 13. 6.

Act. 13. 18. Ἐτροποφόρησεν.

Non est idē ferre, si quid ferendū est, & probare si quid probandum nonest.

so to bee by the person *distempered*, his heart will soone embrace whatsoever shall bee spoken to rectifie his judgement or affection. A good conceit of the *spirit* of the speaker is of as much force to prevaile as his *words*. Words especially prevaile, when they are uttered more from the *bowels* than the braine, and from our owne *experience*, which made even Christ himselfe a more compassionate *high Priest*. When men come to themselves againe, they will bee the deepest censurers of their owne miscariage. Cap. 14.

§. 3.

Moreover, to the right comforting of an afflicted person, speciall care must be had of discerning the true *ground* of his grievance, the *coare* must be searched out; if the griefe ariseth from outward causes, then it must be carried into the right channell, the course of it must bee turned another way, as in staying of *blood*; wee should grieve for sinne in the *first place*, as being the *evill* of all evils: If the ground be *sinne*, then Further directions.

Cap. 14. then it must be drawne to a head, from a *confused* griefe to some more *particular* sinne, that so wee may strike the right veine; but if wee finde the spirit much cast downe for particular sinnes,

3. then comfort is presently to be applyed; But if the griefe be not fully ripe, *then*, as we use to *help* nature in its offers to purge, by *Physicke*, till the sick matter be carried away; so when *conscience*, moved by the *spirit*, begins to ease it selfe by *confession*, it is good to help forward the work of it, till wee find the heart low enough for comfort to be laid upon. When *Paul* found the *Iaylor* cast downe almost as low as hell, hee stands not now upon further hammering, and preparing of him for mercie, (that worke was done already,) but

Acts 16.31 presently stirres him up to *beleeve in the Lord Iesus Christ*; here being a fit place for an interpreter to declare unto man *his* righteousnesse, and *his* mercy that belongs unto *him* after he hath acknowledged *his* personall and *particular* sins, which the naturall guile of the heart is extreamely backward to doe, and yet

cannot

cannot receive any ſound peace till it be done: If ſignes of grace be diſcerned, here likewiſe is a fit place to declare unto man the ſaving worke of grace in his heart, which Sathan labours to hide from him. Men oft are not able to reade their owne evidences without help. Cap. 14.

In caſe of ſtifneſſe and ſtanding out, it is fit the *Man of God* ſhould take ſome *authority* upon him, and lay a *charge* upon the ſoules of men in the name of Chriſt, to give way to the truth of Chriſt, and to forbeare putting off that mercy which is ſo kindly offered, when we judge it to be their portion; which courſe will be ſucceſſull in hearts *awed* with a reverend feare of *grieving Gods Spirit*. Sometimes men muſt be dealt roundly withall, as *David* here deales with his owne ſoule, that ſo whileſt we aſke a reaſon of their dejection, they may plainly ſee they have no reaſon to be ſo caſt downe; for oftentimes *grievances* are irrationall, riſing from *miſtakes*; and *counſell*, bringing into the ſoule a *freſh light*, diſſolves thoſe groſſe

fogges,

Cap. 14. *fogges*, and setteth the soule at *liberty*. What griefe is contracted by *false* reason, is by *true* reason altered. Thus it pleaseth God to humble men by letting them see in what need they stand one of another, that so the communion of Saints may be indeared; every relation wherein wee stand towards others, are so many bonds and sinewes whereby one *member* is fitted to derive comfort
Col. 3. 14. to another, *through love the bond of perfection*: All must be done in this sweet *affection*. A member out of joynt must be tenderly set in again, and bound up, which onely men guided by the spirit of love seasoned with discretion are fit to doe, they are *taught of God* to doe what they should. The more of Christ is in any man, the more willingnesse and fitnesse to this duty; to which this should encourage us, that in strengthening *others* we strengthen *our selves*, and derive upon our selves the *blessing*
Psal. 41. 1. pronounced on those that *consider the needie*, which will be our comfort here, and crowne hereafter, that God hath honoured us, to be *instruments* of spiri-

tuall

tuall good to others. It is an injunction to *cõfort the feeble minded*, & there is an heavy imputation on those that *comforted not the weak*: when men will not *owne* men in *trouble*, but as the herd of *Deere* forsake & push away the *wounded* Deere frõ them: And those that are any wayes cast downe, must stoop to those wayes which God hath sanctified to convey cõfort; for though sometimes the Spirit of God immediatly comforts the soul, *which is the sweetest*, yet for the most part the *Sun of righteousnesse* that hath *healing in his wings*, conveyeth the beames of his comfort by the helpe of *others*, in whom *hee* will have much of our comfort to lie hid, and for this very end it pleaseth God to exercise his children (and Ministers especially) with tryalls and afflictions, that so they having felt what a troubled spirit is in *themselves*, might be able to cõfort others, in their distresses with the same comfort wherewith they have beene comforted: God often suspends comfort from us to drive us to make use of *our Christian friends*, by whom hee purposeth to doe us

Cap. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 14.

Ezek. 34. 4.

Si illatas molestias lingua dicat, a conscientia dolor eliminat, vulnera enim clausa plus cruciant. Greg.

Cap. 14.

us good. Oftentimes the very *opening* of mens grievances, bringeth *eaſe* without any further working upon them; the very opening of a *veine* cooles the blood. If God in the ſtate of *innocencie* thought it fit *man* ſhould have a *helper*, if God thought it fit to ſend an *Angell* to comfort Chriſt in his *agonies*, ſhall any man thinke the comfort of *another* more than needs? Sathan makes every *affliction*, by reaſon of our corruption, a *temptation* to us, whereupon we are to encounter not onely with our owne *corruptions*, but with *ſpirituall wickedneſſes*, and need we not then that others ſhould joyne forces with us to diſcover the temptation, and to confirme and comfort us againſt it? for ſo *reaſon* joyning with *reaſon*, and *affection* with *affection*, wee come by uniting of ſtrength, to bee impregnable. Sathan hath moſt advantage in *ſolitarineſſe*, and thereupon ſets upon Chriſt in the *wilderneſſe*, and upon *Eve* ſingle, and it added to the glory of Chriſts victory, that he *overcame* him in a ſingle combat, and in a place of ſuch diſadvantage. Thoſe

Mat. 4.
Gen. 3.

that

that will be *alone* (at such times) doe as much as in them lieth to tempt the *tempter* himselfe to tempt them. The Preacher gives three reasons why *two are better than one.* 1. Because if *one fall,* the other may *lift him up:* as that which is *stronger* shoreth up that which is *weaker,* so *feeble minds* are raised and kept up by the *stronger.* Nay, oftentimes he that is weaker in one grace, is stronger in another; one may help by his *experience* and *meekenesse of love,* that needs the help of another for *knowledge.* 2. If *two lye together,* one may warm another by *kindling* one anothers *spirits.* Where *two* meete together upon such holy grounds and aymes, there Christ by his *Spirit* makes up another, and this three-fold cable who shall breake? While *Ioas* lived, *Iehoiada* stood upright; While *Latymer* and *Ridley* lived, they kept up *Cranmer* by intercourse of letters and otherwise, from entertaining counsells of *Revolt.* The Disciples presently upon *Christs* apprehension *fainted,* notwithstanding he laboured by his heavenly doctrine to put

Cap. 14.

Eccles. 4. 9.

1.

2.

Cap. 14. 3.

courage & comfort into them. 3. If any give an *on-set* upon them, there is *two to withstand it*, *Spirit* joyning with *spirit*; and because there is an *acquaintance* of spirits as well as of persons, those are fittest to lay open our mindes unto, in whom upon experience of their fidelity, our hearts may most safely relie. Wee lose much of our strength in the losse of a true friend; which made *David* bemoane the losse of his friend *Ionathan*, *Woe is me for thee my brother Ionathan.* Hee lost a piece of himselfe, by losing him whom his heart so clave unto; Saint *Paul* accounted that God had shewed especiall mercy to him, in the recovery of *Epaphroditus*.

Solatium vitæ, habere cui pectus aperias. Ambros.

2 Sam. 1. 20

Phil. 2. 27.

§. 4.

Miscariages in the party that needs to be comforted.

But there are divers miscarriages in those that are *troubled*, which make the *comfort* of others of none effect.

1.

1. When the *troubled party* deales not directly, but *doubleth* with him that is to helpe him. Some are ashamed to *acknowledge* the true ground of their *grievance*, pretending sorrow for one thing,

thing, when their hearts tell them it ariſeth from another; Like the *Lapwings* which make greateſt noiſe fartheſt from their neaſt, becauſe they would not have it diſcovered: This deceit moved our bleſſed Saviour (who knew what was in the hearts of men,) to fit his *anſwers* many times, rather to the *man* than to the *matter*. Cap. 14.

2. Some relie too much upon particular men, Oh if they had ſuch a one they ſhould do well, and miſlike others, (fitter perhaps to deale with them, as having more through knowledge of their eſtates,) becauſe they would have their diſeaſe rather *covered* than cured; or if *cured*, yet with *ſoft words*, whereas no playſter worketh better than that which cauſes ſmart. Some out of meere humorous *fondneſſe* muſt have that which can hardly bee got, or elſe nothing pleaſes them: *David* muſt needs have the *waters of Bethleem* when others were neerer hand: And oftentimes when men have not onely whom they deſire, but ſuch alſo who are fit and dexterous in dealing with a troubld 2 Sam. 23. 15.

Cap. 14. ſpirit, yet their ſoules feele no comfort, becauſe they make *idols* of men; Whereas men at the beſt are but *conduits* of comfort, and ſuch as God freely conveyeth *comfort* by, taking liberty oft to deny comfort by them, that ſo he may be acknowledged the *God of all comfort*.

3. 3. Some delude themſelves, by thinking it ſufficient to have a few good words ſpoken to them, as if that could cure them; not regarding to apprehend the ſame, and mingle it with *faith*, without which, *good words* loſe their working, even as wholſome *Phyſick* in a dead ſtomack.

Beſides miſcarriages in *comforting*; times will often fall out in our lives, that we ſhall have none either to comfort us, or to be comforted by us, and then what will become of us unleſſe we can comfort our ſelves? Men muſt not thinke alwaies to live upon *almes*, but lay up ſomething in ſtore for themſelves, and provide oyle for *their owne* lamps, and be able to draw out ſomething from the *treaſury* of their *owne hearts*.

hearts. We must not goe to the Surgeon for every scratch. No wise traveller but will have some refreshing waters *about him*. Againe, wee are often driven to retire home to our owne hearts, by uncharitable *imputations* of other men; even *friends* sometimes become *miserable comforters*: it was *Iobs case*, his friends had honest intentions to comfort him, but erred in their manner of dealing; if hee had found no more comfort by reflecting upon his owne *sinceritie*, than he received from them, who laboured to take it from him, hee had beene doubly miserable. We are most privy to our owne intentions and aimes, whence comfort must bee fetched; Let others speake what they can to us, if our owne hearts speake not with them, we shall receive no satisfaction. Sometimes it may fall out, that those which should *unloose* our spirits when they are *bound up*, mistake, the key misses the right wards, and so wee lie bound still. Opening of our estate to another is not good, but when it is necessary, and it is not ne-

Cap. 14.

Job 2.

Cap. 15.

ceſſary, when we can fetch ſupply from our *owne* ſtore; GOD would have us tender of our reputations, except in ſome ſpeciall caſes, wherein wee are to *give glory* to God by a free and full confeſſion. Needleſſe diſcovery of our ſelves to others, makes us feare the conſcience of another man, as privie to that which we are aſhamed hee ſhould be privy unto: and it is neither *wiſedome* nor *mercy* to put men upon the rack of *confeſſion*, further than they can have no eaſe any other way, for by this meanes we raiſe in them a jealouſie towards us, and oft without cauſe; which weakneth and tainteth that *love* which ſhould *unite* hearts in *one*.

CAP. XV.

Of flying to God in diſquiets of ſoule. Eight obſervations out of the text.

Queſt.

WHat if neither the ſpeech of others to us, nor the rebuke of our owne hearts will quiet the ſoule; Is there no other remedy left?

Yes,

Yes, then looke up to GOD, the Father and fountaine of comfort, as *David* doth here; For the more speciall meanes whereby he sought to recover himselfe, was by laying a *charge* upon his *soule* to *trust in God*; for having let his soule runne out too much, he begins to recollect himselfe again, and resigne up all to God. Cap. 15. *Answ.*

§. 1.

But, how came *David* to have the command of his owne *soule*, so, as to take it off from *griefe*, and to place it upon God, could hee dispose of his owne *heart* himselfe? *Quest.*

The childe of God hath something in him *above* a man, hee hath the *Spirit of God* to guide his spirit: this *command* of *David* to his *soule* was under the command of the *Great Commander*: God commands *David* to *trust in him*, and at the same time infuseth strength into his soule by thinking of Gods command, and trusting to Gods power, to *command it selfe* to *trust in God*: so that this *command* is not onely by *Answ.*

autho-

Cap. 15.

authoritie, but by *vertue* likewise of Gods *command:* As the inferiour orbes move as they are moved by a higher; So *Davids* spirit here, moves as it is moved by *Gods Spirit*, which inwardly spake to him to speake to himselfe.

David in speaking thus to his owne soule, was, as every true Christian is, a *Prophet*, and an *instructer* to himselfe: It is but as if *inferiour officers* should charge in the name and power of the King. Gods children have a principle of life in them from the Spirit of God, by which they command themselves. To give charge belongs to a Superiour; *David* had a double Superiour above him, his owne spirit as sanctified, and Gods Spirit guiding that. Our spirits are the *Spirits* agents, and the Holy Spirit is Gods agent, maintaining *his* right in us. As God hath made man a free agent, *So* he guides him, and preserves that *free* manner of working which is agreeable to mans nature.

By this it appeares, that *Davids* moving of himselfe, did not hinder the Spirits moving of him, neither did the Spirits

Spirits moving of him, hinder him from moving himſelfe in a free manner; for the *Spirit* of God moveth according to our principles, it openeth our underſtandings to ſee that it is beſt to *truſt in God*; It moveth ſo ſweetly, as if it were an inbred principle, and *all one* with our *owne* ſpirits; If we ſhould hold our *will* to move it ſelfe, and not to be moved by the Spirit, wee ſhould make a God of it, whoſe property is to move other things, and not to be moved by any. Cap. 15.

Wee are in ſome ſort *Lords* over our owne ſpeeches and actions, but yet, under a *higher* Lord. *David* was willing to truſt in God, but God wrought that *will* in him: he firſt makes our will *good*, and then workes by it. It is a ſacrilegious liberty that will acknowledge no dependance upon God. Wee are wiſe in *his wiſedome*, and ſtrong in *his* ſtrength, who ſaith, *Without me yee can doe nothing*. But the *budde* of a good deſire, and the *bloſſome* of a good reſolution, and the *fruit* of a good action, all comes from GOD. Indeed the

Ergone ita liberi eſſe volunt, ut nec Deum volunt habere Dominum? Aug. de Spir. & Lit.

Iohn 15.

Cap. 15.

certum est, nos velle cũ volumus, sed ille facit ut velimus. Aug.

the *understanding* is ours whereby wee know what to doe, and the *will* is ours whereby wee make choice of what is best to be done; but the *light* whereby wee know, and the *guidance* whereby wee choose, that is from a *higher agent*, which is ready to flow into us with present fresh supply, when by vertue of former strength wee put our selves forward in obedience to God. Let but *David* say to his soule being charged of God to *trust*, I charge thee my soule to *trust in him*, and hee findes a present strength inabling to it. Therefore wee must both depend upon God as the first Mover, and withall set all the inferiour wheeles of our soules a going according as the Spirit of God ministers motion unto us. So shall wee be free from *selfe-confidence*, and likewise from neglecting that order of working which God hath established. *David* hearkened what the *Lord* said, before he said any thing to *himselfe*, so should wee. Gods Commands tend to this, that wee should command our selves. God, and the Minister under God, bid

Duties.

1.

2.

us

us *truſt in him*, but all is to no purpoſe till grace be wrought in the ſoul, whereby it bids *it ſelfe*; Our ſpeaking to others doth no good, till they by entertaining what we ſay, ſpeak the ſame to their owne ſoules. Cap. 15.

In this *charge* of *David* upon his owne ſoule, we may ſee divers paſſages and *priviledges* of a gracious heart in trouble.

§. 2.

As, 1. *That a Chriſtian when hee is beaten out of all other comforts, yet hath a God to runne unto.* A *wicked man* beaten out of earthly comforts, is as a naked man in a ſtorme, and an unarmed man in the field, or as a ſhip toſſed in the Sea without an anchor, which preſently daſhes upon rocks, or falleth upon quickſands; but a Chriſtian when hee is driven out of all comforts below, nay, when God ſeemes to bee angry with him, hee can appeale from God *angry* to God *appeaſed*, hee can *wraſtle* and ſtrive with God by Gods *owne* ſtrength, *fight* with him with his owne weapons *Obſer.* 1.

Cap. 15. weapons, and *plead* with God by his owne *arguments*. What a happy estate is this? who would not be a Christian, if it were but for this, to have something to *relie* on when all things else faile? The confusion and unquietnesse which *troubles* raise in the soule, may drive it from *resting in it selfe*, but there can never bee any true peace setled, untill it sees and resolves *what to stay upon.*

§. 3.

2. 2. We see here, that *there is a sanctified use of all troubles to Gods children*; first they drive them *out of themselves*, and then draw them *neerer to GOD*. Crosses indeed of themselvs *estrange* us more from God, but by an over-ruling worke of the *Spirit* they bring us neerer *to* him, The soule of it selfe is ready to *misgive*, as if God had too many *controversies* with it, to shew any favour towards it; and Sathan helpeth; because hee knowes nothing can stand and prevaile *against God*, or a *soule* that *relyeth on him*, therefore hee labours to *breed* and *encrease* an everlasting *division* betwixt

betwixt God and the ſoule; but let not Chriſtians muſe ſo much upon their *trouble*, but ſee whither it carries them, whether it brings them neerer unto God, or not; It is a never failing rule of diſcerning a man to be in the ſtate of grace, *when he findes every condition draw him neerer to God*; for thus it appeares that ſuch *love* God, and are *called of him*, unto whom *all things worke together for the beſt*. Cap. 15. Rom. 8. 28.

¶. 4.

3. Againe, hence wee ſee that the *Spirit* of God by theſe *inward ſpeeches* doth *awake* the ſoule, and keepe it in a holy *exerciſe*, by ſtirring up the grace of *faith* to its proper function. It is not ſo much the *having* of grace, as grace in *exerciſe*, that preſerves the ſoule; therefore wee ſhould by this and the like meanes *ſtirre up the grace of God* in us, that ſo it may bee kept a working and in vigour and ſtrength. It was *Davids* manner to *awake* himſelfe, by bidding both *heart* and *harpe* to *awake*. It is the *waking Chriſtian* (that hath his *wit* and his *grace* ready about him) who is the 3.

Cap. 15. the safe Christian; grace *dormant* without the *exercise* doth not secure us. It is almost all one (in regard of present exigence) for grace not to *be* and not to *worke*. The soule without *action*, is like an instrument not played upon, or like a ship alwayes in the Haven. *Motion* is a preservative of the *purity* of things. Even life it selfe is made more *lively* by action. The Spirit of GOD whereby his children are led, is compared to things of the quickest and strongest actions; as *fire* and *winde*, &c. God himselfe is a pure *act*, alwayes in *acting*; and every thing the nearer it comes to God, the more it hath its *perfection* in working. The happinesse of man consists chiefly in a gracious frame of *spirit*, and *actions* suitable sweetly issuing there-from: the very *rest* of heavenly bodies is in *motion* in their proper places. By this stirring up the grace of God in us, *sparkles* come to be *flames*, and all graces are kept bright. Troubles stirre up *David*, and *David* being stirred stirs up himselfe.

4. We

Cap. 15.

§. 5.

4. We see likewise here a *further use of Soliloquies* or *speeches to our own hearts*; when the soule by entring into it selfe sees it selfe put out of order, then it injoynes this duty of *trusting in God* upon it: if wee looke onely on our selves and not turne to God, the worke of the soule is imperfect: *then* the soule worketh as it should, when as by reflecting on it selfe, it gathers some *profitable* conclusion, and leaveth it selfe with God. *David* upon reflecting on *himselfe* found nothing but *discouragement*; but when he lookes upward to GOD, there hee findes *rest*. This is one end, why God suffers the soule to tire and beate *it selfe*, that finding *no rest* in it selfe, it might seeke to him. *David* yeelds not so much to his *passion* as that it should keepe him from God: Therefore let no man truly *religious* pretend (for an excuse) his *temper* or provoking *occasions*, &c. for *grace* doth raise the soule *above* nature; Grace doth not only *stop* the soule in an *evill* way, but carries 4.

Cap. 15. ries it to a contrary *good*, and raiſeth it up to God. Though holy men be *ſubject to like paſſions with others* (as it is ſaid of *Elias*) yet they are not *ſo* inthralled tothem, as that they carry them wholly away from their God, but they heare a voice of the *Spirit* within them, calling them back againe to their former *communion* with God; and ſo *grace* takes occaſion, (even from *ſinne*) to exerciſe it ſelfe.

Jam. 5. 17.

§. 6.

5. 5. Obſerve further, that *diſtruſt is the cauſe of all diſquiet*: the ſoule ſuffers it ſelfe by ſomething *here* below to be drawne away from God, but can finde no reſt till it returne to him againe. As *Noahs Dove* had no place to ſet her *foote upon*, till it was received into the *Arke* from whence it came. And it is Gods mercy to us, that when we have let goe our hold of God, wee ſhould finde nothing but trouble and unquietneſſe in any thing elſe, that ſo we might remember from whence *wee are fallen*, and returne home againe. That is a good trouble which frees us from the greateſt

Gen. 8. 11.

greatest trouble, and brings with it the most comfortable rest; It is but an unquiet *quiet*, and a restlesse *rest* which is *out* of God. It is a deepe spirituall judgement for a man to finde too much rest in the creature: The soule that hath had a saving worke upon it, will be alwayes impatient untill it recover its former sweetnesse in God: After Gods *Spirit* hath once *touched* the soule, it will never be quiet untill it stands pointed God-ward. Cap. 15.

But conscience may object, *Vpon any offence is God offended*, and therefore not to be *trusted?* *Object.*

It is true, where faith is not above *naturall conscience*; but a conscience *springled with the blood of Christ*, is not scared from God by its infirmities and failings, but as *David* here, is rather stirred up to runne unto God by his *distemper*; and it had beene a greater sinne than his distemper *not* to have gone unto God. Those that have the spirit of *sonnes* in their hearts, runne not further *from* God after they have a little *strayed from him*, but though it be *Answ.* Trust in God, tho an offended God.

Cap. 15. the nature of ſinfull *paſſions* to breed griefe and ſhame, yet they will repaire to God againe, and their *confidence* overcomes their *guilt*; So well are they acquainted with Gods gracious diſpoſition.

Yet we ſee here, *David* thinkes not of *truſting in God*, till firſt he had done juſtice upon his owne ſoule, in rebuking the *unruly* motions thereof; *Cenſure* for ſinne goeth before *favour* in pardoning ſinne, or *boldneſſe* to aſke pardon of God; thoſe that *love God* Pſal.97.10 muſt *hate ill*: If our *conſciences condemne us* of allowing any ſin, we cannot have *boldneſſe with God* who is (light and can abide no darkneſſe and) *greater than our conſciences*.

§. 7.

6. 6. Moreover, hence wee ſee *it is no eaſie thing to bring God and the heart together*: *David* here as he often *checks* his heart, ſo he doth often *charge* his heart; Doubts and troubles are ſtill gathering upon him, and his faith ſtill gathering upon them. As one ſtriving to get the haven, is driven back by the waves,

waves, but recovering himselfe againe, gets forward still, and after often beating back, at length obtaines the wished haven, and then is at rest. So much adoe there is to bring the soule unto God, the harbour of true comfort. It were an easie thing to be a Christian, if Religion stood onely in a few outward works and duties, but to take the soule to taske, and to deale roundly with our owne hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soule into spirituall subjection unto God; this is not so easie a matter, because the *soule* out of *selfe love* is loath to enter *into it selfe*, lest it should have other thoughts of it selfe then it would have; *David* must bid his soule *trust* and *trust*, and *trust* againe before it will yeeld. One maine ground of this difficulty, is that contrariety which is in the soule by reason of contrary principles: The soule so farre as it is gracious *commands*, so farre as as it is rebellious, *resists*, which drew holy *Austen* to "a kinde of astonishment; *The soule* "*commands the body and it yeelds* (saith "he

Cap. 15.

Vide hoc monstrū, & quare istud? Aug. Confes.

Cap. 15.

" he) *it commands it ſelfe, and is reſiſted* " *by it ſelfe*; it commands the hand to " move, and it moveth with ſuch an " unperceiveable quickneſſe that you " can diſcerne no diſtance betwixt the " command and the motion: Whence " comes this? but becauſe the ſoule " perfectly wills not and perfectly in- " joynes not that which is good, and ſo " farre forth as it fully wills not, ſo farre " it holds backe. There ſhould bee no need of commanding the ſoule if it were perfect, for then it would bee of it ſelfe, what it now commandeth. If *David* had gotten his ſoule at perfect freedome at the firſt, hee needed not have repeated his charge ſo often upon it. But the ſoule naturally ſinks downward, and therefore had need often to be wound up.

Non ex toto vult non ex toto imperat, in tantum non fit quod imperat, in quantum non vult.

§. 8.

7. 7. Wee ſhould therefore labour to bring our ſoules (as *David* doth here) to a firme and peremptory *reſolution*, and not ſtand *wavering*, and as it were equally ballanced betwixt God and other

ther things; but enforce our ſoules, wee ſhall get little ground of *infidelity* elſe; drive your ſoules therefore to this iſſue, either to rely upon God, or elſe to yeeld up it ſelfe to the preſent grievance; if by yeelding it reſolves to be miſerable theres an end, but if it deſires *reſt*, then let it reſolve upon this onely way to *truſt in God*; and well may the ſoule ſo *reſolve*, becauſe in God there are grounds of *quieting* the ſoule, above all that may unſettle it; In him there is both *worth* to ſatisfie, and *ſtrength* to ſupport the ſoule. The beſt way to maintaine inward *peace*, is to ſettle and *fixe* our thoughts upon that which will make us *better*, till wee finde our hearts warmed and wrought upon thereby, and then (as the Prophet ſpeaks) *God will keepe us in peace: peace*, that is, *in perfect and abundant peace*. This *reſolution* ſtayed *Iob*, that *though God ſhould kill him*, yet hee reſolved *to truſt in him*. Anſwerable to our reſolution is our peace: the more *reſolution* the more *peace*; *Irreſolution* of it ſelfe without any grievance is full of *diſquiet*; Cap. 15. Eſay 26 3.

Cap. 15.

et; It is an unsafe thing alwayes to begin to live; to bee alwayes cheapning and paltering with God: Come to this point once, *Trust God* I ought, therefore *trust God* I will, come what *may* or *will*.

And it is good to *renew* our resolutions againe and againe: for every *new resolution* brings the soule closer to God, and gets further in him, and brings fresh strength from him; which if wee neglect, our *corruption* joyning with outward *hinderances* will carry us further and further backward, and this will double, yea multiply our trouble and griefe to recover our selves againe; wee have both winde and tide against us: Wee are going up the hill, and therefore had need to arme our selves with *resolution*. Since the *fall*, the motion of the soule *upward* (as of heavy bodies) is violent, in regard of *corruption* which weighes it *downeward*, and therefore all enforcement is little enough; Oppose therefore with *David* all *invincible* resolution, and then doubt not of prevailing; If wee resolve in Gods

Gods *power* and not our owne, and bee *ſtrong* in the Lord, and *not* in our *ſelves*, then it matters not what our troubles or temptations *bee* either from within, or without, for *truſt in God* at length will triumph. Cap. 15. Ephe. 6. 10.

Here is a great mercy, that when *David* had (a little) let goe his hold of God, yet God would not let goe his hold of him, but by a ſpirit of faith drawes him back againe to himſelfe; God *turnes us* unto him and then wee returne. *Turne us againe* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *cauſe thy face to ſhine upon us, and wee ſhall be ſaved.* When the ſoule leaves God once, it loſes its way, and it ſelfe; and never returnes till God recalls it againe. If morall principles cheriſhed and ſtrengthened by good *education*, will enable the ſoule againſt vicious *inclinations*, ſo that, though ſome influence of the heavens worke upon the *aire*, and the aire upon the *ſpirits*, and the ſpirits upon the *humors*, and theſe incline the *temper*, and *that* inclines the *ſoule* of a man ſuch and ſuch wayes, yet *breeding* in the refined- Pſ. 80. 19 *Animus æger ſemper erat.*

er

Cap. 15. er ſort of *civill* perſons, will much prevaile to draw them another way? What then may wee thinke of this powerfull grace of *faith* which is altogether ſupernaturall? Will not this carry the ſoule above all naturall inclinations whatſoever (though ſtrengthened by outward occaſions) if we reſolve to put it to it? *David* was a King of *other men*, but here he ſhewes that hee was a King *of himſelfe*; What benefit is it (for a man) to bee Ruler over all the world, and yet remaine a *ſlave* to himſelfe?

§. 9.

8. 8. Againe, *David* here doth not onely *reſolve*, but *preſently takes up his ſoule before it ſtrayed too farre from God*; the further and the longer the ſoule wanders from God, the more it intangles it ſelfe, and the thicker darkneſſe will cover the ſoule, yea the loather it is to come to God againe, being aſhamed to looke God in the face after diſcontinuing of *acquaintance* with him; Nay the ſtronger the league growes betwixt

betwixt sinne and the soule, and the more there groweth a kinde of *sutablenesse* betwixt the soule and *sinne*; Too long *giving way to base* thoughts and affections, discovers too much complacencie and *liking* of sinne. If we once give way, a *little* griefe will turne into *bitter* sorrow, and that into a *setled* pensiveneſſe and *heavineſſe of spirit*, *feare* will grow into *astonishment*, and *discouragement* into *despaire*; If ever we meane to trust God, Why not now? How many are taken away in their *offers* and *essaies*, before they have prepared their hearts to cleave unto God? The sooner wee give up our selves to the Lord, the sooner wee know upon what termes wee stand, and the sooner wee provide for our best security, and have not our grounds of comfort to seeke when wee shall stand most in need of them. *Time* will salve up griefe in the meanest of men, *Reason* in those that will suffer themselves to bee ruled thereby, will cure (or at least stay the fits of it) sooner: but *Faith* if we stir it up, will give our soules no rest, untill Cap. 15.

Cap. 15.

till it hath brought us to our true rest (that is) to God: therefore wee should presse the heart forward to God *presently* that Satan make not the rent greater.

Lastly, here wee see, that *though the soule be overborne by passion for a time, yet if grace hath once truely seasoned it, it will worke it selfe into freedome againe*; grace as oyle will bee above. The eye when any dust falls into it, is not more tender and unquiet, till it be wrought out againe, than a gracious soule is being once troubled: the *spirit* as a spring will bee *cleansing* of it selfe more and more. Whereas the heart of a carnall man, is like a standing poole, whatsoever is cast into it, *there* it rests; trouble and disquietnesse in him are in their proper place; It is proper for the Sea to rage and cast up dirt: God hath set it downe for an eternall rule, that *vexation* and *sinne* shall bee inseparable. Happinesse and rest were *severed* from sinne *in heaven* when the Angels fell, and *in Paradise* when *Adam* fell, and will remaine *for ever* separated, untill the breach be made up by *faith* in Christ.

Fulfisti Domine & sic est, ut omnis inordinatus affectus sibi sit pœna. Aug. Gen. 3.

CAP.

Cap. 16.

Cap. XVI.

Of trust in God: grounds of it: especially his providence.

But to come neerer to the unfolding of this *trusting in God*, which *David* useth here as a remedy against all distempers. Howsoever confidence and trust bee an *affection* of nature, yet by the *spirits* sanctifying and carrying it to the *right object*, it becomes a *grace* of wonderfull use. In the things of *this life* usually bee that *hopes most* is the most unwise man; he being *most deceived* that hopes most, because hee trusts in that which is *uncertaine*, and therefore deceitfull hope is counted but the dreame of a waking man. But in *Religion* it is farre otherwise, here, hope is the maine supporting grace of the soule, springing from faith in the *promises* of God.

Trust and *hope* are often taken in the same sense, though a distinction betwixt them hath sometimes its use: *faith* looks

Cap. 16.

lookes to the word *promising*, hope to the thing *promised* in the word, faith lookes to the *authority* of the *promiser*, hope (especially) to the *goodnesse* of the *promise*; *faith* looks upon things as present, *hope* as to come hereafter. God as the *first truth* is that which faith relyes on, but God as the *chiefe good*, is that which hope rests on, *trust* or *confidence* is nothing else, but the strength of *hope*; if the thing hoped for be *deferred*, then of necessity it enforces *waiting*, and waiting is nothing else but hope and trust lengthened.

Howsoever, there may be use of these and such like distinctions, yet usually they are taken promiscuously, especially in the old Testament. The nature and use of *faith* is set out by tearmes of *staying, resting, leaning, rolling our selves* upon God, &c. which come all to one, and therefore wee forbeare any further curious distinction.

God & the *Soule* must be brought together by *trust*.

Now seeing *trusting in God* is a remedy against all distempers, it is necessary that wee should bring the *object* and the *act* (God and the Soule) together;

ther; for effecting of which, it is good to know ſomething concerning *God*, and ſomething concerning *truſt*. God is onely the fit *object* of truſt, *hee* hath all the properties of that which ſhould be truſted on; A man can bee in no condition wherein God is at a leſſe and cannot helpe him; if comforts be wanting *hee* can *create* comforts, not onely out of *nothing*, but out of diſcomforts; He made the *Whale* that ſwallowed up *Ionas*, a meanes to bring him to the *Shore*: The Sea was a *wall* to the Iſraelites on both ſides: The devouring flames were a great refreſhing to *the three children*, *in the fiery furnace*; That trouble which *we* think will ſwallow us up, may be a meanes to bring us to our haven; *So mighty is God in power, and ſo excellent in working*. God then; and God onely is a fit foundation for the ſoule to build it ſelfe upon, for the firmer the *foundation* is, the ſtronger will the building be, therefore thoſe that will build *high* muſt digge *deepe*: the higher the tree riſeth, the deeper the root ſpreadeth and faſtneth

Cap. 16.

Iona. 1. 17.

Dan. 3.

Eſa. 28. 29.

Cap. 16. neth it selfe below. So it is in faith, if the foundation thereof be not *firme*, the soule cannot build it selfe *strongly* upon it; Faith hath a double *principle* to build on, either a principle of *being*, or a principle of *knowing*, the principle of *being* is *God himselfe*, the principle of *knowing* is *Gods word*, whereby God commeth forth (*out of that hidden light which none can attaine unto*) and discovereth his meaning towards us for our good.

1. This then must 1. be supposed for a ground, *that there is a God*, and *that* God *is*, (that is) hath a full and eternall *being*, and giveth a *Being*, and an *order* of Being, to all things else; some things have *onely* a Being, some things *life* and *being*, some things *sense*, &c. and some things have a more *excellent being* including all the former, as the being of creatures indued with *reason*; If God had a not *being*, nothing else could be; In things subordinate one to another, take away the *first*, and you take away *all* the rest: Therefore this proposition (*God is*) is the *first* truth of all, and if this

this were not, *nothing* elſe ſhould be: as we ſee if the heavenly bodies doe not move, there is no motion here below, Cap. 16.

2. In the divine *nature* or *being*, there is a ſubſiſting of *three perſons*, every one ſo *ſet out* unto us, as *fitted* for us to *truſt in*: the *Father* as a *Creator*, the *Sonne* as a *Redeemer*, the *Holy Ghoſt* as a *Comforter*, and all this in reference *to us*: God in the *firſt perſon* hath *decreed* the great work of our *ſalvation*, and all things tending to the accompliſhment of it: God in the *ſecond perſon* hath exactly and fully *anſwered* that decree and plot, in the worke of our *redemption*; God in the *third perſon*, diſcovers and applyes all unto us, and fits us for communion with the *Father* and the *Sonne* from whom he proceeds. 2.

3. God cannot be comfortably thought upon *out of Chriſt* our *mediator*, in whom hee was *reconciling the world to himſelfe*, as being a *friend* both to *God* and *us*, and therefore *fit* to bring *God* and the ſoule *together*, being a middle perſon in the *Trinity*; In Chriſt *Gods* nature becomes lovely *to* 3. 1 Cor. 5. 19.

Cap. 16. *us*, and *ours* to God: *otherwise* there is an utter *enmity* betwixt his *pure* and our *impure* nature: Christ hath made up the vaste gulfe betweene God and us; there is nothing more terrible to thinke on, than an *absolute God* out of Christ.

4. 4. Therefore for the better drawing of us to trust in *God*, wee must *conceive* of *him* under the sweet relation of a *Father*; Gods nature is *Fatherly* now unto us, and therefore *lovely*.

5. 5. And for further strengthning our faith, it is needfull to consider what *excellencies* the Scripture giveth unto God, answerable to all *our necessities*; what sweet *Names* God is pleased to be knowne unto us by for our com-

Exod. 34. 6. fort, *as* a *mercifull, gracious, long suffering God*, &c.

When *Moses* desired to see the glory of God, God thus manifested himself, in the way of goodnesse, *I will make*

Exo 33. 16. *all my goodnesse passe before thee.*

Whatsoever is good in the *creature* is *first* in God as in a fountaine; and it is in God in a more *eminent* manner

manner and *fuller* measure. All *grace* and holinesse, all sweetnesse of *affection*, all *power* and *wisdome*, &c. as it is *in* him, so it is *from* him, and we come to conceive these properties to bee in God, 1. by feeling the comfort and power of them in our selves; 2. by observing these things in their measure to be in the best of the creatures, whence wee arise to take notice of what grace and what love, what strength and wisdome &c. is in God, by the beames *of these* which wee see in his creature, with adding in our thoughts *fulnesse* peculiar to God, and abstracting *imperfections* incident to the creature; for that is in God in the highest degree, the sparkles whereof is but in us. Cap. 16. 1. 2.

6. Therefore it is fit that unto all other *eminencies* in God, wee should strengthen our faith by considering those glorious *singularities*, which are altogether *incommunicable* to the creature, and which give strength to his other properties, as that God is not onely *gracious* and *loving*, *powerfull*, *wise*, &c. but that he is infinitely, eternally, 6.

Cap. 16. and unchangeably ſo. All which are compriſed *in* and drawne *from* that one name *Iehovah*, as being of *himſelfe*, and giving a being to *all* things elſe, *of nothing*; and able when it pleaſeth him to turne all things to nothing againe.

7. What *God is*, hee maketh good by *providence*.

As God is thus, ſo hee makes it good by anſwerable *actions* and *dealing* towards us, by his continuall *providence*; the conſideration whereof is a great ſtay to our faith, for by this providence God makes uſe of all his former excellencies for his peoples good; for the more comfortable apprehenſion of which, it is good to know that Gods *providence* is extended as farre as his *creation*. Every creature (in every element and place whatſoever) receiveth a powerfull influence from God, who doth what pleaſeth him, both *in heaven, and earth, in the ſea, and all places*; But we muſt know, God doth not put things into a frame, and then leave them to their owne motion, as we doe *clocks*, after wee have once ſet them right, and *ſhips* after wee have once built them, commit them to winde and waves;

waves; but as hee *made* all things, and *knowes* all things, so (by a continued kind of creation) he preserves all things in their being and working, and governes them to their ends: Hee is the first mover that sets all the wheeles of the creature a working: One wheele may move another, but all are moved by the first. If God moves not, the *clock* of the creature stands. If God should not uphold things, they would presently fall (*to nothing*) from whence they came. If God should not guide things, *Sathans* malice, and *mans* weakneſſe, would soone bring all to a confusion. If God did not rule the great family of the world, all would breake and fall to pieces, whereas the wise *providence* of God, keepeth every thing on its right hinges. All things stand in obedience to this *providence* of God, and nothing can withdraw it selfe from under it; If the creature withdraw it selfe from one order of providence, it falls into another; If man (the most unruly and disordered creature of all) withdraw himselfe from Gods *gracious* government Cap. 16.

Cap. 16. of him to *happineſſe*, hee will ſoone fall under Gods juſt government of him to *deſerved miſerie*; If hee ſhakes off Gods ſweet yoake, he puts himſelfe under Sathans heavy yoake, who (as Gods executioner) hardens him to deſtruction; and ſo whiles hee ruſhes againſt Gods will, he fulfils it. And whilſt he will not willingly doe Gods will, Gods will is done upon him againſt his will.

The moſt caſuall things fall under *providence*, yea (the moſt diſordered thing in the world, (ſinne) and (of ſins the moſt horrible that ever the Sunne beheld) *the crucifying of the Lord of life*, was guided by a hand of *providence* to the greateſt good. For that which is *caſuall* in regard of a *ſecond cauſe*, is not ſo in regard of the firſt, whoſe *providence* is moſt cleerely ſeene in caſuall events that fall out by *accident*, for in theſe the *effect* cannot bee aſcribed to the next *cauſe*, God is ſaid to kill him, who was
Deu. 19. 5. unwarily ſlaine by the falling of an axe or ſome *inſtrument* of death.

And though man hath a *freedome* in working, and (of all men) *the hearts of Kings*

Kings are most free, yet even these are guided by an *over-ruling power*, as the rivers of water are carried in their channels, whither skilfull men list to derive them. Cap. 16. Prov. 21. 1.

For setling of our *faith* the more, God taketh liberty in using weake meanes to great purposes, and setteth aside more *likely* and *able* meanes, yea sometimes he altogether disableth the greatest meanes, and worketh often by no meanes at all. It is not from want of power in God, but from abundance and multiplying of his goodnesse, that hee useth any means at all: there is nothing that he doth by meanes, but hee is able to doe without meanes.

Nay, God often bringeth his will to passe by crossing the course and streame of meanes, to shew his own *soveraignty*, and to exercise our *dependance*; and maketh his very enemies, the accomplishers of his owne will, and so, to bring about that which they oppose most. Hence it is that we beleeve *under* hope *against* hope. Psal. 135. 6.

But wee must know, Gods manner

Cap. 16. of *guiding* things is without prejudice of the proper working of the things themselves; hee guideth them sweetly according to the *instincts* hee hath put into them; for,

1. 1. He furnishes *creatures* with a vertue and power to worke, and likewise with a manner of working sutable to their owne nature, as it is proper for a man (when hee workes) to worke with *freedome*, and other creatures by naturall instinct, &c. 2. God maintaineth both the power and manner of working, and perfecteth and accomplisheth the same by acting of it, being neerer to us in all wee doe, than we are to our selves. 3. He applies and stirres up our abilities and actions, to this or that particular as hee seeth best. 4. He suspends or removes the hinderances of all actions, and so, powerfully, wisely, and sweetly orders them to his owne ends. When any evill is intended, God either puts bars and letts to the execution of it, or else limiteth and boundeth the same both in regard of *time* and *measure*, so that our enemies either shall

2.

Intimior intimo nostro.

3.

4.

ſhall not doe the evill at all, or elſe not ſo long a *time*, or not in ſuch a *height* of miſchiefe, as their malice would carry them to: *The rod of the wicked* may light *upon the back of the righteous*, but it *ſhall not reſt* there. God knowes how to take our enemies off, ſometimes by changing, or ſtopping their wills, by offering conſiderations of ſome good or ill, danger or profit to them; ſometimes by taking away, and weakning all their ſtrength, or elſe by oppoſing an equall or greater ſtrength againſt it. All the ſtrength our enemies have reſts in God; who if hee denies concourſe and influence, the *arme* of their power, (as *Ieroboams* when hee ſtretcht it out againſt the *Prophet*) ſhrinks up preſently. Cap. 16. Pſal. 125. 3

God is not onely the cauſe of things and actions, but the cauſe likewiſe of the ceſſation of them, why they fall not out at all. GOD is the cauſe why things are *not* as well as why they *are*; The cauſe why men favour us not, or (when they doe favour us) want preſent wiſdome and ability to help us, is from

Deus eſt prima cauſa cujuſcunq; non eſſe.

Cap. 16. from Gods withdrawing the concurrence of his light and ſtrength from them. If a ſkilfull Phyſitian doth us no good, it is becauſe it pleaſeth God to hide the right way of curing at that time from him. Which ſhould move us to ſee God in all that befalls us, who hath ſufficient reaſon, as to *doe* what he doth, ſo *not* to doe what he doth not, to hinder, as well as to give way.

The God of ſpirits hath an influence into the ſpirits of men, into the principles and ſprings of all actions; Otherwiſe he could not ſo certainly foretell things to come. God had a worke in *Abſaloms* heart in that hee refuſed the beſt *counſell*; there is nothing independant of him, who is the mover of all things, and himſelfe unmoveable.

Nothing ſo *high*, that is above his providence; Nothing ſo *low*, that is beneath it; Nothing ſo large, but is bounded by it; Nothing ſo confuſed, but God can order it; Nothing ſo *bad*, but he can draw good out of it; Nothing ſo wiſely plotted, but God can diſappoint it, as *Achitophels* counſell; Nothing

thing ſo ſimply and unpolitiquely caried, but hee can give a prevailing iſſue unto it: Nothing ſo freely carryed, in regard of the next cauſe, but God can make it neceſſary in regard of the event: Nothing ſo naturall, but he can ſuſpend in regard of operation, as heavy bodies from ſinking, fire from burning, &c. Cap. 16.

It cannot but bring ſtrong ſecurity to the ſoule, to know that in all variety of changes, and intercourſe of good and bad events, *God* and *Our* God, hath ſuch a diſpoſing hand. Whatſoever befalls us, all ſerves to bring Gods *electing* love, and our *glorification* together. Gods *providence* ſerveth his *purpoſe* to ſave us. All *ſufferings*, all *bleſſings*, all *ordinances*, all *graces*, all *common gifts*, nay our very *falls*, yea *Sathan* himſelfe with all his *inſtruments*, as over-mastered, and ruled by God, have this injunction upon them, to further Gods good intendment to us, and a prohibition to doe us no harme. *Auguſtus* taxed the world for civill ends, but Gods providence uſed this as a meanes for Chriſt to

Cap. 17. Ester 6.1.

to bee borne at *Bethleem*. *Ahashueroth* could not *sleepe*, and thereupon calls for the *Chronicles*, the reading of which occasioned the *Iewes* delivery. God oft disposeth little occasions, to great purposes. And by those very wayes whereby proud men have gone about to withstand Gods counsells, they have fulfilled them, as we see in the story of *Ioseph* and *Moses*, *in the thing wherein they dealt proudly*, He *was above them*.

Divinũ cõsilium dum devitatur, impletur, humana sapientia dum reluctatur, comprehenditur. Greg. Ex. 10. 11.

Cap. XVII.

Of Graces to be exercised in respect of Divine Providence.

WE are under a *providence* that is above our owne; which should be a ground unto us, of exercising those graces that tend to settle the soule in all events. As,

1. Hence to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and command the soule an holy *silence*, not daring to yeeld to the least rising of our hearts against God. *I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth, because*

Psal. 39. 9.

becauſe thou didſt it, ſaith *David*. Thus *Aaron* when hee had loſt his *two ſonnes*, both at *once*, and that by *fire*, and by fire *from heaven*, which carried an evidence of Gods great diſpleaſure with it, yet *held his peace*. In this *ſilence* and *hope* is *our ſtrength*. Fleſh and blood is proane to expoſtulate with God, and to queſtion his dealing, as we ſee in *Gedeon*, *Ieremie*, *Aſaph*, *Habaccuk*, and others. *If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* but after ſome ſtrugling betweene the *fleſh* and the *ſpirit* the concluſion will be, *yet* howſoever matters goe *God is good to Iſrael*. Where a fearefull ſpirit, and a melancholy temper, a weake judgement, and a ſcrupulous and raw conſcience meete in one, there *Sathan* and *his*, together with mens *owne hearts*, which like *Sophiſters* are continually cavilling againſt themſelves, breed much diſquiet, and makes the life uncomfortable. Such therefore ſhould have a ſpeciall care as to grow in knowledge, ſo to ſtick cloſe to ſure and certaine grounds, and bring their conſciences to the rule. Darkneſſe cauſeth

Cap. 17.

Levit. 10. 1, 2.

Pſal. 73. 1.

Cap. 17. cauſeth feares. The more light, the more confidence. When wee yeeld up our ſelves to God, wee ſhould reſolve upon *quietneſſe*, and if the heart ſtirres, preſently uſe this check of *David*, *Why art thou diſquieted?*

Gods wayes ſeeme oft to us full of contradictions, becauſe his courſe is to bring things to paſſe by contrary meanes. There is a myſtery not onely in Gods *decree* concerning mans eternall eſtate, but likewiſe in his *providence*, as why he ſhould deale unequally with men, otherwiſe equall. His judgements are a great depth, which we cannot fadome, but they will ſwallow up our thoughts and underſtandings. God oft wraps himſelfe in a cloude, and will not be ſeene till afterward. Where we cannot trace him, wee ought with S. *Paul* to *admire* and *adore* him. When we are in heaven, it will be one part of our happineſſe, to ſee the harmony of thoſe things, that ſeeme now confuſed unto us. All Gods dealings will appeare beautifull in their due ſeaſons, though we for the preſent ſee not the contiguity

ity and linking together of one thing with another. Cap. 17.

2. Hence likewise proceeds a holy resigning of our selves to God, *who doth all things according to the counsell of his owne will.* His *will* is a wise will, it is guided by *counsell*, a soveraigne prevailing will. The onely way to have our *will*, is to bring it to Gods will. *If we could delight in him, wee should have our hearts desire.* Thus *David* yeelds up himselfe unto God; *Here I am, let the Lord deale with mee as seemeth good unto him* And thus *Elie* when God foretold by *Samuel* the ruine of his house, quiets himselfe, *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good.* Thus our blessed *Saviour* stayes himselfe, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* And thus the people of God, when *Paul* was resolved to goe to *Ierusalem*, submitted, saying, *The will of the Lord be done*; a speech fit to proceed out of the heart and mouth of a Christian. 2. *Voluntas Dei necessitas rei.* 2 Sam. 15. 26. 1 Sam. 3. 18 Acts 21. 14 *Vox vere Christianorum.*

Wee may desire and long after a change of our condition, when wee looke upon the *grievance* it selfe, but yet

Cap. 17. yet remember ſtill that it bee with reſervation, when wee looke upon the
Rev. 6. 10. *will of God*, as *How long Lord, holy and true, &c.* Out of inferiour reaſons wee may with our Saviour deſire a removall of the *cup*, but when wee looke to the ſupreame *reaſon of reaſons*, the *will of God*, here we muſt ſtoop and kiſſe the rod. *Thus humbling our ſelves under his mighty hand*, which by murmuring and fretting we may make more heavy, but not take off, ſtill adding new guilt and pulling on new judgements.

3. 3. The way patiently to *ſuffer* Gods will, is to inure our ſelves firſt to *doe* it. *Paſſive* obedience ſprings from *active*. He that endures any thing, will endure it quietly, when hee knowes it is the will of God, and conſiders that what ever befalls him, comes from his good pleaſure. Thoſe that have not inured themſelves to the yoke of *obedience*, will never endure the yoke of *ſuffering*, they fume and rage *as a wilde Bullin a net*, as the Prophet ſpeakes. It is worth the conſidering, to ſee two men of equall parts

parts under the ſame croſſe, how quietly and calmely the one that eſtabliſheth his ſoule on Chriſt, will beare his afflictions, whereas the other rageth as a *foole*, and is more beaten. Cap. 17.

Nothing ſhould diſpleaſe us, that pleaſeth God; neither ſhould any thing be pleaſing to us, that diſpleaſeth him. This conformity is the ground of comfort. Our owne will takes away God, as much as in it lyes. *If wee acknowledge God in all our wayes, hee will direct our paths, and leade us the way that we ſhould goe.* The quarrell betwixt God and us is taken up, when *his* will, and our will are *one*; when wee have ſacrificed our ſelves, and our wills unto God; when, as he is higheſt in himſelfe, ſo his will hath the higheſt place in our hearts. Wee finde by experience, that when our wills are ſo ſubdued, that wee delight *to doe*, what God would have us doe, and *to be* what God would have us be, that then ſweet peace preſently riſeth to the ſoule. *Propria voluntas Dei quantum in ipſa eximit.* Prov. 3. 6. Eſa. 48. 10.

When wee can ſay, Lord, if thou wilt have me poore and diſgraced, I am

Cap. 17. content to be ſo. If thou wilt have me ſerve thee in this condition I am in, I will gladly doe ſo. It is enough to mee that *thou* wouldſt have it ſo. I deſire to yeeld readily, humbly, and cheerefully, to thy diſpoſing *providence*. Thus a godly man ſayes *Amen* to Gods *Amen*, and puts his *fiat* and *placet* to Gods. As the *Sea* turnes all rivers into its owne relliſh; ſo he turnes all to his owne ſpirit, and makes whatſoever befalls him, an exerciſe of ſome vertue. A *Heathen* could ſay, that calamities did rule over men, but a wiſe man hath a ſpirit overruling all calamities, much more a *Chriſtian*. For a man to be in this eſtate, is to enjoy heaven *in the world* under heaven; Gods *Kingdome comes* where *his will is thus done* and ſuffered.

None feele more ſweet experience of Gods *providence*, than thoſe that are moſt reſolute in their obedience. After we have given glory to God in relying upon his *wiſdome*, *power*, and *truth*, wee ſhall finde him imploying *theſe* for our direction, aſſiſtance, and bringing about of things to our deſired iſſue, yea above

bove what ever wee looked for, or thought of. Cap. 17.

In all cases that fall out, or that wee can put to our selves, as in case of *extremity*, *opposition*, *strange accidents*, *desertion* and *damps of spirit*, *&c.* here wee may take *Sanctuary*, that wee are in covenant with him, who sits at the sterne and rules all, and hath committed the government of all things to his *Sonne*, our *Brother*, our *Ioseph*, the *second person* in heaven. Wee may bee sure no hurt shall befall us, that he can hinder; and what cannot hee hinder *that hate the keyes of hell and of death?* unto whom we are so neere, that he carries *our names in his breast*, *and on his shoulders*, as the *high Priests* did those of *the twelve Tribes*. Though his *Church* seems a *widdow* neglected, yet hee will make the world know, that shee hath a *Husband* will right her in his good time. 4.

But it may be demanded, What course is to be taken, for guidance of our lives in particular actions, wherein doubts may arise, what is most agreeable to the will of God? Quest.

1. We must not put all carelesly up- Answ. 1.

Cap. 17. on a *providence*, but first consider what is *our* part, and so farre as God prevents us with light, and affords us helps and meanes, we must not be failing in our duty. Wee should neither out-runne, nor bee wanting to *providence*. But in perplexed cases, where the reasons on both sides seem to be equally ballanced, see whether part makes more for the maine end, the *glory of God*, the *service of others*, and advancement of *our owne spirituall good*. Some things are so cleare & even, that there is not a *best* between them, but *one* may be done as well as the *other*, as when two wayes equally tend to one and the same place.

Summa ratio quæ pro religione facit.

2. 2. Wee are *not our owne*, and therefore must not set up our selves. Wee must not consult with *flesh and blood* either in our selves or others, for selfe-love will deprave all our actions, by setting before us corrupt ends. It considers not what is best, but what is safest. By-respects sway the ballance the wrong way.

3. 3. When things are cleare, and Gods will is manifest, further *deliberation* is dangerous

dangerous, and for the moſt part argues a falſe heart, as wee ſee in *Balaam*, who though he knew Gods minde, yet would bee ſtill conſulting, till God in judgement gave him up to what his *covetous* heart led him unto. A man is not fit to deliberate, till his heart bee purged of falſe aymes, for elſe God wil give him up to the darkneſſe of his owne ſpirit, and hee will be alwayes warping unfit for any byas. Where the aymes are good, there God delighteth to reveale his good pleaſure. Such a ſoule is levell and ſuitable to any good counſell, that ſhall be given; and prepared to entertaine it. In what meaſure any luſt is favoured, in that meaſure the ſoul is darkned. Even *wiſe Solomon*, whileſt he gave way to his *luſt*, had like to have loſt his wiſdome. Cap. 17.

We muſt looke to our place wherein God hath ſet us; if we be in ſubjection to others, *their* authority ought to ſway with us. Neither is it the calling of thoſe that are ſubjects, to enquire over-curiouſly into the myſteries of government, for *that*, both in peace and

Cap. 17.

warre breeds much disturbance, and would trouble all designes.

The lawes under which we live, are particular determinations of the law of God in some duties of the *second table.* For example, The Law of God sayes, *Exact no more than what is thy due.* But what in particular is thy due, and what *another* mans, the lawes of men determine, and therefore ought to be a rule unto us so farre as they reach; though it be too narrow a rule to be good *only* so farre as mans law guides unto. Yet *law* being the joynt reason and consent of many men for publique good, hath an use for guidance of all actions that fall under the same. Where it dashes not against Gods law, what is agreeable to *law* is agreeable to *conscience.*

Nimis angusta innocentia est ad legem bonum esse.

The law of God in the due enlargement of it, to the least beginning and occasions is exceeding broad, and allowes of whatsoever stands with the light of reason, or the bonds of humanity, civility, &c. and whatsoever is against these, is *so farre* against Gods law. So that higher rules be looked to in

in the first place, there is nothing lovely, or praise-worthy among men, but ought to be seriously thought on. Cap. 17.

Nature of it selfe is wilde and untamed, and impatient of the yoke; but as beasts that cannot indure the yoke at first, after they are enured a while unto it, bear it willingly, and cary their work more easily by it; So the yoke of obedience, makes the life regular and quiet. The meeting of authority, and obedience together, maintaines the order and peace of the world.

So of that question.

Though blindfold obedience, such as our *Adversaries* would have, be such as will never stand with sound peace of conscience, which alwayes lookes to have light to direct it; (for else a blinde conscience would breed blinde feares) yet in such doubtfull cases wherein we cannot winde out our selves, we ought to light our candles at others, whom we have cause to thinke by their *place* and *parts* should see further then wee. In matters of outward estate, wee will have men skilfull, of our counsell; and 5.

Cap. 17.

Sententiæ boni viri.

Christians would finde more sound peace, if they would advise with their godly and learned Pastors and friends. Where there is not a direct word, there is place for the counsell of a prudent man. And it is a happinesse for them whose *businesse* is much, and *parts* not large, to have the benefit of those that can give ayme, and see further than themselves. The meanest Christian understands his owne way, and knowes how to doe things with better advantage to his soule, than a graceless though learned man; yet is still glad of further discovery. *In counsell* there is peace, *the thoughts* being thus *established.*

When wee have advised and served Gods *providence* in the use of meanes, then if it fall out otherwise then wee looke for, wee may confidently conclude, that God would not have it so, otherwise to our griefe wee may say, it was the fruit of our owne rashnesse.

Where we have cause to thinke that wee have used better meanes in the search of grounds, and are more free from

from partiall affections than others, there we may use our owne advise more safely. Otherwise what wee doe by consent from others, is more secure and lesse offensive, as being more countenanced. Cap. 17.

In advice with others, it is not sufficient to be generally wise, but experienced and knowing in that wee aske, which is an honour to Gods gifts where we finde them in any kinde. When wee set about things in *passion*, we work not as men or Christians, but in a bestiall manner. The more passion, the lesse discretion; because passion hinders the sight of what is to be done. It clouds the soule, and puts it on to action without advisement. Where passions are subdued, and the soul purged and cleared, there is nothing to hinder the impression of Gods Spirit; the soule is fitted as a cleane glasse to receive light from above. And that is the reason why *mortified men* are *fittest* to advise with in the particular cases incident to a Christian life.

After all advise, extract what is fittest, 6.

Cap. 17. teſt, and what our ſpirits doe moſt bend unto: For in things that concerne our ſelves, God affords a light to diſcerne out of what is ſpoken, what beſt ſuteth us. And every man is to follow moſt what his owne *conſcience*, (after information) dictates unto him; becauſe conſcience is Gods deputy in us, and under God moſt to bee regarded, and whoſoever ſins againſt *it*, in his owne conſtruction ſinnes againſt God. God vouchſafeth every Chriſtian in ſome degree, the grace of *ſpirituall prudence*, whereby they are enabled to diſcerne what is fitteſt to be done in things that fall within their compaſſe.

7. It is good to obſerve the particular beeks of providence, how things joyne and meete together: fit occaſions and ſuting of things are intimations of Gods will. *Providence* hath a language, which is well underſtood by *thoſe* that have a familiar acquaintance with Gods dealing, they ſee a traine of providence, leading one way more than to another.

8. Take eſpeciall heed of not grieving the

the Spirit, when hee offers to be our guide, by ſtudying evaſions, and wiſhing the caſe were otherwiſe. This is to be Law-givers to our ſelves, thinking that we are wiſer than God. The uſe of diſcretion is not to direct us about the end, whether wee ſhould doe well or ill, (for a ſingle heart alwayes aymes at good:) but when we reſolve upon doing well, and yet doubt of the manner how to performe it: diſcretion lookes not ſo much to what is lawfull, (for that is taken for granted,) but what is moſt expedient. A diſcreet man lookes not to what is *beſt*, ſo much as what is *fitteſt* in ſuch and ſuch reſpects, by eying circumſtances, which if they ſort not, doe vary the nature of the thing it ſelfe. Cap. 17.

And becauſe it is not in *man* to know his owne wayes, wee ſhould looke up unto *Chriſt*, the great *Councellour* of his *Church*, to vouchſafe the ſpirit of counſell and direction to us: that may *make our way plaine before us*, by ſuggeſting unto us, *this is the way, walke in it*. Wee owe God this reſpect, to depend upon him

Cap. 17. him for direction in *the particular* paſſages of our lives, in regard that hee is our *Soveraigne*, and his will is the *rule*, and we are to be accountable to him as our *Iudge*. It is God onely that can ſee through buſineſſes, and all helps and lets that ſtand about.

After wee have rolled our ſelves upon God, wee ſhould immediately take that courſe he enclines our hearts unto, without further diſtracting feare. Otherwiſe it is a ſigne wee *commit not our way unto him*, when we do not quietly *truſt him*, but remain ſtill as thoughtfull, as if wee did not truſt him. After *prayer* and *truſt* followes *the peace of God*, and a heart void of further dividing *care*. Wee ſhould therefore preſently queſtion our hearts, for queſtioning his *care*, and not regard what *feare* will be ready to ſuggeſt, for that is apt to raiſe concluſions againſt our ſelves, out of ſelfe-conceited grounds, whereby wee uſurpe upon GOD, and wrong our ſelves.

Phil. 2. 4.

It was a good reſolution of the *three* Dan. 3. *young men* in *Daniel*, *Wee are not carefull*

to

to answer thee O King. We know our duty, let God doe with us as hee pleaseth. If *Abraham* had hearkned to the voice of nature, he would never have resolved to sacrifice *Isaac*, but because hee cast himselfe upon Gods providing, God in the *Mount* provided a *Ramme* in stead of his *Sonne.* Cap. 18.

CAP. XVIII.

Other grounds of trusting in God: namely the Promises. And twelve directions about the same.

§. 1.

BUt for the better setling of *our trust in God*, a further discovery is necessary then of the *nature* and *providence* of God; for though the *nature* of God be written in the booke of the *Creatures* in so great letters, as hee that runs may reade; and though the *providence* of God appeares in the order and use of things; yet there is *another booke* whereby to know the will of God towards *us*, and our duty towards *him*: We must therefore

There must be a discovery of the *mind* of God, as well as of his *nature.*

Cap. 18. therefore have a knowledge of the *promiſes* of God, as well as of his *providence*; for though God hath diſcovered himſelfe moſt graciouſly in Chriſt unto us, yet had we not a word of *promiſe*, wee could not have the boldneſſe to build upon Chriſt *himſelfe*; therefore from the ſame grounds (that *there is a God*) there muſt be a revealing of the will of God, for elſe we can never have any firme *truſt* in *him* further than hee offers himſelfe to be *truſted*; Therefore hath God opened his heart to us in his *word*, and reached out ſo many ſweet *promiſes* for us to lay hold on, and ſtooped ſo low, (by gracious *condeſcending* mixed with *authority*) as to enter into a covenant with us to perform all things for our good: for *Promiſes* are (as it were) the ſtay of the ſoule in an *imperfect* condition, and ſo is *faith* in them, untill all *promiſes* ſhall end in *performance*, and *faith* in *ſight*, and *hope* in *poſſeſſion*.

1. Now theſe promiſes are 1. for their *ſpring* from whence they proceed, *free ingagements of God*; for if hee had not bound

bound himſelfe, who could? and 2. they are for their value *precious*, and 3. for their *extent* large, even of all things that conduce to happineſſe; and 4. for their *vertue* quickning and ſtrengthning the ſoule, as comming from the love of God, and conveying that love unto us by his *Spirit* in the beſt fruits thereof: and 5. for their *certainty*, they are as ſure as the Love of God in Chriſt is, upon which they are founded, and from which *nothing can ſeparate us*. For all promiſes are either Chriſt himſelfe, (*the promiſed ſeed*) or elſe they are of good things made to us *in him* and *for him*, and accomplished for his ſake; they are all made *firſt* to him as *heire of the promiſe*, as *Angell of the covenant*, as *head* of his body, and as our Elder brother, &c. for *promiſes* being the fruits of Gods love, and Gods love being founded *firſt* on Chriſt, it muſt needs follow that all the promiſes are both made,, and made good to us in and through him, who is *yeſterday and to day, and for ever the ſame.*

Cap. 18.
2.
3.
4.
5.
Rom. 8. 39.
Heb 13. 8.

That wee ſhould not call Gods love into

Cap. 18.
1. into queſtion, he not onely gives us his *word*, but a binding word, *his promiſe*;
2. and not only a *naked* promiſe, but hath
3. entred into *Covenant* with us, founded upon full ſatisfaction by the blood of Chriſt, and unto this Covenant *ſealed by the blood* of the Lord JESUS, he hath
4. added the *ſeales* of *Sacraments*, and unto
5. this he hath added his *oath*, that there might be no place left of doubting to the diſtruſtfull heart of man; there is no way of ſecuring *promiſes* amongſt *men*, but God hath taken the ſame to *himſelfe*, and all to this end, that wee might not onely *know* his minde towards us, but be fully *perſwaded* of it, that as verily *as he lives*, hee will make good what ever he hath promiſed for the comfort of his Children. What greater aſſurance can there be, then for Being *it ſelfe* to lay his being to pawne? and for life *it ſelfe* to lay life to pawne, and all to comfort a poore ſoule?

The boundleſſe and reſtleſſe deſire of mans ſpirit will never bee ſtayed without ſome diſcovery of the *chiefe good*, and the way to attaine the ſame: men

men would have beene in darkneſſe about their finall condition, and the way to pleaſe God and to pacifie and purge their conſciences, had not the word of God ſet downe the *ſpring* and *cauſe* of all evill, together with the cure of it, and directed us how to have communion with GOD, and to raiſe our ſelves above all the evill which wee meet withall betwixt us and happines, and to make us every way *wiſe to ſalvation*. Hence it is that the *Pſalmiſt* preferres the manifeſtation of God by his *word*, before the manifeſtation of him in his moſt glorious *works*. Cap. 18. Pſal. 19.7.

And thus wee ſee the neceſſity of a double principle for *faith* to rely on, 1. *God*, and 2. *the word of God* revealing his will unto us, and directing us to make uſe of all his *Attributes*, *Relations*, and *providence* for our good; and this *word* hath its ſtrength from him who gives a being and an accompliſhment unto it; for *words* are as the authority of *him* that uttereth them is; When wee look upon a *Grant* in the word of a *King*, it ſtayes our mindes, becauſe wee

Cap. 18.

know he is able to make it good; and why ſhould it not ſatisfie our ſoules to looke upon *promiſes* in the word of a God? whoſe words, as they come from his *truth* and expreſſe his *goodneſſe*, ſo they are all made good by his *power* and *wiſdome*.

By the bare word of *God* it is that the *heavens* continue, and the *earth* (without any other foundation) hangs in the mids of the world, therefore well may the ſoule ſtay it ſelfe on *that*, even when it hath nothing elſe in ſight to relye upon; By his word it is that the *covenant* of *day* and *night*, and the preſervation of the world from any further *overflowing of waters* continueth; which if it ſhould faile, yet his covenant with his people ſhall abide firme for ever, though the whole frame of nature were diſſolved.

Truſt muſt anſwer the *truth* of God.

When we have *thus* gotten a fit foundation for the ſoule to lay it ſelfe upon, Our next care muſt be (by *truſting*) to build on the ſame; All our miſery is either in having a *falſe foundation*, or elſe in *looſe building* upon a true; therefore

fore having so strong a ground as Gods *Nature*, his *providence*, his *promise*, &c. to build upon, the only way for establishing our soules is *(by trust)* to rely firmly on him. Cap. 18.

Now the reason why *Trust* is so much required, is because 1. it *emptyeth* the soule, and 2. by emptying enlargeth it, and 3. seasoneth and fitteth the soule to joyne with so gracious an object, and 4. filleth it by carrying it out of it selfe unto God, who presently (so soone as he is trusted in) conveyes himselfe and his goodnesse to the soule; and thus *we* come to have the comfort, and *God* the glory of all his excellencies. Thus salvation comes to be sure unto us, whilest *faith* looking to the *promises* (and to God freely offering grace therein) resigns up it selfe to God, making no further question from any unworthinesse of its owne. Why *faith* so requisite in Christians 1. 2. 3. 4.

And thus wee returne to GOD by *cleaving* to him, from whom we fell by *distrust*, living under a *new covenant* meerely *of grace*; And no *grace* fitter than that which gives all to CHRIST, Ier. 31. 3.

Cap. 18. considering the fountaine of all our good is (out of our selves) *in him*, it being safest for us (who were so ill husbands at the first) that it should be so, therefore it is fit we should have use of such a grace that will carry us out of our *selves* to the spring head.

The way then whereby *faith* quieteth the soule, is, by raising it *above* all discontentments and stormes here below, and pitching it upon God, thereby uniting it to him, whence it drawes *vertue* to oppose and bring under whatsoever troubles its peace. For the soule is made for God, and never findes rest till it returns to him againe; when God and the soule meet, there will follow contentment; God (simply considered) is not all our happinesse, but God as *trusted in*; and Christ as wee are made *one with him*; The soule cannot so much
Mat. 9. 20. as *touch* the *hemme* of *Christs garment*, but it shall finde *vertue comming from him* to sanctifie and settle it; God in Christ is full of all that is good; when the soule is *emptyed*, *inlarged* and *opened* by faith to receive goodnesse offered, there

there must needs follow sweet satisfaction. Cap. 18.

§. 2.

For the better strengthning of our *trust*, it is not sufficient that we trust *in God* and his *truth* revealed; but we must doe it by *light* and *strength* from him: Many beleeve in the truth by *humane* arguments, but no arguments will convince the soule but such as are fetched from the *inward* nature, and *powerfull* worke of truth it selfe; No man can know God, but by God; None can know the *Sunne*, but by its owne light; None can know the *truth* of God (so as to build upon it) but by the truth *it self* and the *Spirit* revealing it by its *owne light* to the soule; that soule which hath felt the power of truth in casting it downe, and raising it up againe, will easily be brought to *rest* upon it; It is neither *education*, nor the authority of *others* that professe the same *truth*, or that we have been so taught by men of *great parts*, &c. will settle the heart, untill we finde an *inward power* and *authority*

Directions about trusting.

I. It must be by divine light.

Cap. 18. *rity* in the *truth it ſelfe* ſhining in our hearts by its *owne* beames; hence comes unſetledneſſe in time of *troubles*, becauſe we have not a *ſpirituall diſcerning* of ſpirituall things. Supernaturall truths muſt have a ſupernaturall power to apprehend them, therefore God createth a ſpirituall *eye* and *hand* of the ſoule which is *faith*.

In thoſe that are truely converted, all *ſaving truths* are tranſcribed out of the *Scripture* into their hearts, *they are taught of God*; So as they find all truths both concerning the *ſinfull eſtate*, and the gracious and *happy eſtate* of man *in themſelves*; they cary a *divinity* in them and about them, ſo as from a ſaving *feeling* they can ſpeak of *converſion*, of *ſin*, of *grace*, and the *comforts of the Spirit*, *&c.* and from this acquaintance are ready to yeeld and give up themſelves *to truth* revealed and to *God* ſpeaking by it. *Truſt* is never found but upon a ſpirituall *conviction* of the truth and goodneſſe wee rely upon, for the effecting of which the Spirit of God muſt likewiſe *ſubdue* the *rebellion* and *malice* of

Eſa. 54 13.

of our *will*, that so it may be suitable and levell to *divine* things, and relish them as they are; wee must apprehend the *love of God* and the *fruits of it* as better then life it selfe, and then choosing and *cleaving* to the same will soone follow; for as there is a fitnesse *in divine truths* to all the necessities of the soule, so the Soule must be fitted *by them* to *savour* and *apply* them to *it selfe*; and then from an *harmony* between the *soule* and *that* which it applyes it selfe unto, there will follow not onely *peace* in the soule, but *joy* and *delight* surpassing any contentment in the world besides.

Cap. 18. 2. By subduing and changing the will.

As there is in God to satisfie the whole soule, so *trust* carries the whole soule to God; this makes *trust* not so easie a matter, because there must bee an exercise of every faculty of the soule or else our trust is *imperfect* and lame; there must be a *knowledge of him* whom we trust, and *why* we trust, an *affiance* and *love*, *&c.* Onely *they that know God will trust in him*; not that knowledge alone is sufficient, but because the sweetnesse of *Gods love* is let into the soule thereby,

3. By carying the whole soule to God.

Cap. 18.

thereby, which draweth the whole ſoule to *him*; Wee are bidden to *truſt perfectly* in *God*; therefore ſeeing wee have a God ſo *full of perfection* to truſt in; we ſhould labour to truſt perfectly in him.

4. By putting caſes to our ſelves.

Pſal. 3. 6. Pſal. 46. 3. Pſa. 27. 3.

And it is good for the exerciſe of *truſt* to put *caſes* to our ſelves of things that probably may fall out, and then returne to our ſoules to ſearch what ſtrength we have if ſuch things ſhould come to paſſe; thus *David* puts caſes; perfect *faith* dares put the hardeſt caſes to its ſoule, and then ſet God againſt *all* that may befall it.

5. By fitting the promiſe to every condition of our lives.

Againe, labour to fit the *promiſe* to every condition thou art in; there is no *condition* but hath a *promiſe* ſutable, therefore no condition but wherein God may be *truſted*, becauſe his *truth* and *goodneſſe* is alwayes *the ſame*; And in the promiſe, looke both to the good *promiſed*, and to the faithfulneſſe and love of the *promiſer*; It is not good to looke upon the *difficulty* of the thing wee have a promiſe againſt, but who promiſeth it, and for whoſe ſake, and ſo

so see all good things *in Christ* made over to us. Cap. 18.

We should labour likewise for a *single heart* to trust in God *onely*; there is no readier way to fall, than to trust *equally* to two stayes, whereof *one* is rotten, and the *other* sound; therefore as in point of *doctrine* wee are to relie upon Christ *onely*, and to make the Scriptures our rule *onely*; So in life and *conversation*, what ever wee make use of, yet we should *enjoy* and relye *upon God* onely; for either God is trusted *alone* or not at all; those that trust to other things *with God*, trust not *him* but upon *pretence* to carry their *double mindes* with lesse check. 6. By trusting in God *alone*.

Againe, labour that thy soule may answer all the *Relations* wherein it stands to God, by *cleaving* to him, 1. as a *Father* by trusting on his care, 2. as a *teacher* by following his direction, 3. as a *Creator* by dependance on him, 4. as a *husband* by inseparable affection of love to him, 5. as a *Lord* by obedience, &c. And then we may with comfort expect whatsoever good these *Relations* can yeeld: 7. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Cap. 18. yeeld: All which, God regarding more *our* wants, and weakneſſes, than *his owne* greatneſſe, hath taken upon him. Shall theſe *Relations* yeeld comfort from the *creature*, and not from *God himſelfe*, in whom they are in their higheſt perfection? Shall God make other *fathers* and *husbands* faithfull, and not be faithfull *himſelf?* All our comfort depends upon labouring to make theſe *Relations* good to our ſoules.

8. By truſting God for al things in all times.

And as we muſt *wholly* and *only* truſt in God, ſo likewiſe wee muſt truſt him in all conditions and times, for all things that wee ſtand in need of, untill that time comes, wherein wee ſhall ſtand in need of nothing: for as the ſame care of God moved him to *ſave* us, and to *preſerve us* in the world till we be put in poſſeſſion of ſalvation; So the ſame *faith* relyes upon God for *heaven* and all neceſſary *proviſion* till wee come thither; It is the office of *Faith* to quiet our ſoules in all the neceſſities of this life, and we have continuall uſe of truſting while wee are *here:* For even when we have things, yet God ſtill keepes

keepes the blessing of them in his owne hands, to hold us in a continuall dependance upon him: God traines us up this way, by exercising our *trust* in lesser matters, to fit us for greater; thus it pleaseth God to keepe us in a depending condition, untill hee see his owne time; but so good is God that as he intends to give us what wee *wait for*, so will he give us the grace and spirit of faith, to *sustaine* our soules in waiting till we enjoy the same. The unrulinesse of a *naturall* spirit is never discovered more, than when God *defers*, therefore we should labour the more not to withdraw our attendance from God. Cap. 18.

Further, we must know that the condition of a Christian in this life, is *not to see* what he trusts God for, (*he lives by faith and not by sight*) and yet that there is such a vertue in *faith*, which makes *evident* and present, things to come and *unseene*: Because God where hee gives an *eye* of *faith*, gives also a glasse of the *word* to see things *in*, and by seeing of them in the *truth* and *power* of him that *promiseth*, they become *present*, not

9. By trusting God when it sees no helpe; 2 Cor. 5.7.

Cap. 18.

not only to the *understading* to apprehēd thē, but to the *will* to rest upon them, & to the *affections* to joy in thē: It is the nature of *faith* to worke, when it *seeth nothing*, and oftentimes best of all *then*, because God shews himselfe more clearly in his *power*, *wisdome*, & *goodnesse*, at such times; and so his glory shines most, and faith hath nothing else to look upō thē, whereupon it gathers all the forces of the soule together, to fasten upon God.

Why God suffers his children to fall into great extremities.

It should therefore be the chief care of a Christian to strengthen his *faith*, that so it may answer Gods manner of dealing with him in the worst times; for God usually (1. that he might perfectly mortifie our confidence in the
1. creature, and 2. that he might the more
2. *indeare* his *favours* and make them *fresh*
3. and new unto us, and 3. that the *glory* of deliverance may be entirely *his*, without the creatures sharing with
4. him, and 4. that our *faith* and *obedience* may be *tryed* to the uttermost, and discovered) suffers his children to fall into great *extremities* before hee will reach forth his hand to help them, as in *Iobs* case,

case,&c. Therefore Christians should much labour their hearts to *trust* in God in the *deepest extremities* that may befall them, even when *no light* of comfort *appeares* either from *within* or *without*, yea, then (especially) when all other comforts fail; *despaire* is oft the ground of *hope*; when the darkenesse of the night is thickest, then the morning begins to dawne; that which (to a man unacquainted with Gods dealings) is a ground of utter *despaire*, the same (to a man acquainted with the waies of God) is a rise of exceeding *comfort*; for *infinite* power&goodnes can never be at a losse, neither can faith which looks to *that* ever be at a stand, whence it is that both *God* and *Faith* worke best alone; In a hopelesse estate a Christian will see some *door of hope* opened, 1. because God shewes himself neerest to us, when we stand most in need of him; *Help Lord, for vaine is the help of man:* God is never more seen than in the *Mount*; He *knowes our soules best*, &our souls know him best *in adversity*; *then* he is most *wonderfull in his Saints*. 2. because our prayers *then* are

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Christians should trust God most in the worst times.

Esa. 50. 10.

1.

Psal. 31. 7.

2.

Cap. 18.

are (*ſtrong cryes*) fervent and frequent; God is ſure to heare of us at ſuch a time, which pleaſeth him well, as delighting to heare the *voice* of his *Beloved.*

10. By calling to minde former experiences of Gods love.

For our better incouragement in theſe ſad times, and to helpe our *truſt* in God the more, wee ſhould often call to minde the former *experiences*, which either our *ſelves* or *others* have had of Gods goodneſſe, and make uſe of the ſame for our ſpirituall good; *Our Fathers truſted in thee*, (ſaith the Head of the Church) *and were not confounded*; Gods *truth* and *goodneſſe* is unchangeable, *he never leaves thoſe that truſt in him*; ſo likewiſe in our owne experiences, we ſhould take notice of Gods dealings with us in ſundry kindes, how many wayes hee hath refreſhed us, and how good we have found him in our worſt times; After wee have once tryed *him* and *his truth*, we may ſafely truſt him; God will ſtand upon his credit, he never failed any yet, and hee will not begin to breake with us; If his *nature* and his *word*, and his former *dealing* hath beene ſure and ſquare, why ſhould our hearts

Pſal 22.4.

Pſal 9.10.

hearts be wavering? *thy word* (saith the Psalmist) *is very pure* (or tryed) *therefore thy servant loveth it*; the word of God is *as silver tryed in the furnace, purified seven times*; it is good therefore to observe and lay up Gods dealings; Experience is nothing else, but a multiplyed remembrance of former blessings, which will help to multiply our faith; tryed *truth* and tryed *faith* unto it, sweetly agree and answer one another; It were a course much tending to the quickning of the faith of Christians, if they would communicate one to another their mutuall experiences; this hath formerly beene the custome of Gods people. *Come and heare all ye that feare God, and I will declare what hee hath done for my soule*; And *David* urgeth this as a reason to God for *deliverance*, that then *the righteous would compasse him about*, as rejoycing in the experience of Gods goodnesse to *him*; The want of this makes us upon any new tryall to call Gods care and love into question, as if hee had never formerly beene good unto us; whereas every *experi-*

Cap. 18. Psal. 119. 140. Psal. 12. 6.

Christians should communicate their experiences. Psal. 66. 19.

Psa. 142. 7.

Cap. 18. *experiment* of Gods love should refresh our faith upon any fresh onset; God is so good to his children even in this world, that he traines them up by daily renewed *experiences* of his fatherly care; for besides those many *promises* of good things to *come*, hee gives us some evidence and taste of what we beleeve *here*; that by that which wee *feele* wee might be strengthned in that wee *looke for*, that so in both (1. *sense* of what we feele, and 2. *certainty* of what we looke for) we might have full support.

11. By walking in the wayes of God.

But yet we must *trust God*, as he will be trusted, (namely, *in doing good*;) or else we do not trust him but *tempt* him; Our commanding of our soules to trust in God, is but an *Eccho* of what God commands us first; and therefore in the same maner *he* commands us, we shou'd command *our selves*. As God commands us to trust him in doing good, so should wee *commit our soules* to him *in well doing*, and trust him when wee are about his *owne* workes, and not in the workes of darknesse; we may safely expect God in his *wayes of mercy*, when

when we are in his wayes of *obedience*; For *Religion* as it is a doctrine of what is to be *beleeved*, so it is a doctrine according to *godlineſſe*; and the myſteries of *faith* are *myſteries of godlineſſe*, becauſe they cannot be beleeved, but they will inforce a godly converſation; where any true impreſſion of them is, there is holineſſe alwayes bred in that ſoule; therefore a ſtudy of *holineſſe* muſt goe *joyntly* together with a ſtudy of *truſting* in God; *faith* lookes not onely to *promiſes*, but to directions to *duty*, and breeds in the ſoule a liking of whatſoever pleaſeth God; There is a *mutuall* ſtrengthning in things that are good; *truſting* ſtirres to *duty*, and duty *ſtrengthens* truſting by increaſing our liberty and boldneſſe with God. Cap. 18.

Againe, wee muſt maintaine in our ſoules, a *high eſteeme* of the grace of *faith*; the very *tryall* whereof is more *precious* than gold, what then is the grace of faith it ſelfe, and the *promiſes* which it layeth hold on? certainely they tranſcend in *worth* what ever may draw us from God; whence it is that 12. By ſetting a high price upon Faith. 1 Pet. 1. 7.

Cap. 18. the ſoule ſets a high price upon them, and on *faith* that beleeves them; It is impoſſible that any thing in the world ſhould come betwixt the *heart* and *thoſe things* (if once we truely lay hold on them) to undermine *faith* or the *comfort* we have by it; the heart is never drawne to any ſinfull *vanity*, or frighted with any terrour of *trouble*, till *faith* firſt loſeth the ſight and *eſtimation* of divine things, and forgets the *neceſſity* and *excellency* of them. Our Saviour Chriſt when hee would ſtirre up a
Luke 17.6 deſire of *faith* in his Diſciples, ſhewed them the power and excellency of the ſame; *great* things ſtirre up *faith* and keepe it above, and faith keepes the ſoule that nothing elſe can take place
Hoſ.8. 12. of abode in it; when the *great things of God* are brought into the heart by *faith*, what is there in the whole world that can out-bid them? Aſſurance of theſe things upon ſpirituall grounds, overrules both *ſenſe* and *reaſon*, or what ever elſe prevailes with carnall hearts.

CAP.

Cap. 19.

Cap. XIX.

Faith to be prized, and other things undervalued, at least not to be trusted to as the chiefe.

THat *faith* may take the better place in the soule, and the soule in God, the heart must continually be taught of what *little worth* all things else are, as *reputation, riches*, and *pleasures*, &c. and to see their *nothingnesse* in the *word* of God, and in experience of our selves and others, that so our heart being *weaned* from these things, may *open* it selfe to God, and imbrace things of a higher nature; otherwise *baser things* will be neerer the soule than *faith*, and keepe possession against it, so that *faith* will not be suffered to set up a throne in the heart; There must bee an *unloosing* of the heart, as well as a *fastning* of it, and God helpes us in both: for (besides the *word* discovering the vanity of all things else out of God) the maine scope of Gods dealing with his children in any danger or affliction whatsoever,

The means to get an high esteeme of Faith, is to undervalue all things else.

Cap. 19. soever, is to imbitter all other things but *himselfe* unto them: Indeed it is the power of God *properly* which makes the heart to *trust*, but yet the Spirit of God useth *this way* to bring all things else *out of request with us* in comparison of those inestimable good things, which the soule is *created*, *redeemed*, and *sanctified* for; GOD is very jealous of our *trust*, and can indure no *Idoll of jealousie* to be set up in our hearts. Therefore it behooves us to take notice, not onely of the *deceitfulnesse* of things, but of the deceitfulnesse of *our hearts* in the use of them; Our hearts naturally hang loose from God, and are soone ready to joyne with the *creature*; Now the more we observe our hearts in this, the more wee take them off, and labour to set them where they should be placed; for the more we *know* these things, the lesse we shall *trust* them.

Object. But may wee not trust in *riches*, and *friends*, and other outward helps at all?

Answ. Yes, so farre as they are subordinate to God our chiefe stay, with reservation and submission to the Lord; onely so

so far, and so long as it shall please him to use them for our good. Because God ordinarily conveyes his help and goodnesse to us by some creature; we must trust in God to blesse every mercy wee injoy, and to make all helps serviceable to his love towards us. In a word, wee must *trust* and *use* them *in* & *under* God, and so as if all were taken away, yet to thinke God (being *al-sufficient*) can doe without them, what soever hee doth by them for our good. *Faith* preserves the *chastitie* of the soule, & *cleaving* to God is a spirituall *debt* which it oweth to *him*, whereas cleaving to the *creature*, is spirituall *adultery*. Cap. 19.

It is an error in the *foundation* to substitute *false objects* either in *Religion*, or in Christian *Conversation*; for 1. in *religion* trusting in false objects as Saints, & works, &c. breeds false *worship*, and false worship breeds *Idolatry*, and so Gods *jealousie*, and *hatred*. 1. 2. In Christian *Conversation* false objects of trust breeds *false comforts*, & *true feares*; for in what measure wee *trust* in any thing that is *uncertaine*, in the same measure will 2.

Cap. 19. our griefe be when it failes us; the more men relie upon deceitfull Crutches the greater is their fall; God can neither indure *falſe* objects, nor a *double object*, (as hath beene ſhewed) for a man to rely upon any thing *equally* in the ſame ranke with himſelfe; for the propounding of a double object, argues a
Iames 1.8. *double heart*, and a double heart is alwayes *unſetled*, for it will regard God no longer than it can injoy that which it joynes together with *him*; Therefore
Luk.16.13 it is ſaid, *You cannot ſerve two Maſters*, not ſubordinate one to another; whence it was that our Saviour told thoſe *worldly men* which followed him,
Ioh.5.44. *that they could not beleeve in him, becauſe they ſought honour one of another*; and in caſe of competition, if their *honour* and *reputation* ſhould come into queſtion, they would be ſure to be falſe to Chriſt, and rather part with *him* than their own credit and eſteeme in the world.

David (here) by charging his ſoule to *truſt in God*, ſaw there was nothing elſe that could bring true reſt and quiet unto him; for whatſoever is *beſides* God,

God, is but a *creature*; and what ever is in the creature, is but *borrowed*, and at Gods disposing, and *changeable*, or else it were not a creature; *David* saw his error soone, for the *ground* of his disquiet was trusting *something else* besides God, therefore when he began to say, *My hill is strong, I shall not be moved*, &c. then presently *his soule was troubled*. Out of God there is nothing fit for the soule to stay it selfe upon; for Cap. 19. Psal. 30.6.

1. *Outward* things are not fitted to the *spirituall* nature of the soule; they are *dead* things and cannot touch *it* being a *lively spirit*, unlesse by way of taint. 1.

2. They are beneath the worth of the soule, and therefore debase the soul, and draw it lower than *it selfe*. As a *Noble* woman, by matching with a *meane* person much injures her selfe, especially when *higher* matches are offered. Earthly things are not given for *Stayes* wholly to rest on, but for *Comforts* in our way to Heaven; they are no more fit for the soule, than that which hath many *angles* is fit to fill up that which 2.

Cap. 19. is *round*, which it cannot doe, because of the unevenneſſe and void places that will remaine; Outward things are never ſo well fitted for the ſoule, but that the ſoule will preſently ſee ſome voidneſſe and emptineſſe in them, and in it ſelfe in cleaving to them; for that which ſhall be a fit obiect for the ſoule, muſt be 1. for the nature of it *ſpirituall*, (as the ſoule it ſelfe is) 2. *conſtant*, 3. *full*, and *ſatisfying*, 4. of equall *continuance* with it, and 5. alwayes yeelding *freſh* contents: wee caſt away *flowers*, after once we have had the *ſweetneſſe* of thē, becauſe there is not *ſtill* a freſh ſupply of ſweetneſſe. What ever comfort is in the *creature*, the ſoule will ſpend quickly, and looke ſtill for more; whereas the comfort wee have in God is *undefiled* and *fadeth not away*; How can wee truſt to *that* for comfort, which by very *truſting* proves uncomfortable to us? Outward things are onely ſo far forth good, as wee *doe not* truſt in them; *thornes* may be *touched*, but not *reſted* on, for then they will pierce; wee muſt not ſet our hearts upon thoſe things which

which are never evill to us, but when we *set our hearts upon them.* Cap. 19. Psal. 62. 10.

By trusting any thing but God, wee make it 1. an *Idoll*, 2 a *curse* and not a *blessing*, 3. it will prove a *lying vanity*, not yeelding that good which wee look for, and 4. a *vexation*, bringing that evill upon us we looke not for. Ier. 17. 5.

Of all men *Solomon* was the fittest to judge of this, because 1. hee had a large heart able to comprehend the variety of things, and 2. (being a mighty King) had advantages of procuring all outward things that might give him satisfaction, and 3. he had a desire answerable, to search out and extract what ever good the creature could yeeld; and yet upon the *tryall* of all, hee passeth this verdict *upon all*, that they are *but vanity*; whilest he laboured to find that which hee sought for in them, hee had like to have lost himselfe; and seeking too much to strengthen himselfe by forreine combination, hee weakned himselfe the more thereby, untill he came to know where the *whole of man* consists. So that now wee need not try further Eccles. 1. 2. Eccles. 12. 13.

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ther concluſions after the peremptory ſentence of ſo wiſe a man.

But our nature is ſtill apt to thinke there is ſome ſecret good in the *forbidden fruit*, and to buy wiſedome dearly when wee might have it at a cheaper rate, even from former univerſall experience.

It is a matter both to be wondred at and pittyed, that the ſoule having God in Chriſt ſet before it, alluring it unto him, that he might raiſe it, inlarge it, and fill it, and ſo make it above all other things, ſhould yet debaſe and make it ſelfe narrower and weaker by leaning to things meaner than it ſelfe.

The Kingdome, Soveraignty, and large command of *Man*, continueth while he reſts upon God, in whom hee raignes (in ſome ſort) over all things under him; but ſo ſoone as he removes from God to any thing elſe, he becomes weak and narrow and ſlaviſh preſently; for,

The ſoule is as that which it relyes upon; if on *vanity* it ſelfe becomes vain; for that which contents the ſoule muſt ſatisfie

satisfie all the wants and desires of it, which no particular thing can doe, and the soule is more sensible of a little thing that it wants, than of all other things which it injoyes. Cap. 19.

But see the *insufficiency* of all other things (out of God) to support the soul, in their severall degrees. *First*, All *outward* things can make a man no happier than outward things can doe, they cannot reach beyond their proper spheare: but our *greatest* grievances are *spirituall*. 1.

And as for inward things, whether *gifts* or *graces*, they cannot be a sufficient stay for the minde: for 1. *gifts* as policy and wisdome, &c. they are at the best very defective, especially when wee *trust in them*; for *wisedome* makes men often to *rebell*, and thereupon God delighteth to blast their projects: None miscarry oftner than men of the *greatest parts*; as none are oftner drowned than those that are most *skilfull* in swimming, because it makes them *confident*. 2. Esa. 47. 10.

And for *grace* though it be the beginning of a new creature in us, yet it is but

Cap. 19. but a *creature*, and therefore not to be trusted in, nay by trusting in it we imbase it, and make it more *imperfect*; so farre as there is truth of grace, it breeds distrust of our selves, and carryes the soule out of it selfe to the fountaine of strength.

3. And for any workes that proceed from grace, by *trusting* thereunto they prove like the *reede* of Ægypt, which not onely deceives us, but hurts us with the splinters: Good workes are *good*, but confidence in them is hurtfull; and there is more of our *owne* in them (for the most part) to humble us, than of Gods Spirit to embolden us so farre as to trust in them. Alas they have nothing from us, but weaknesse and defilement, and therefore *since the fall*, GOD would have the object of our *trust* to be (*out* of our selves) *in him*; and to that purpose hee useth all meanes to take us out of *our selves*, and from the *creature*, that *he* only might be *our trust*.

4. Yea wee must not trust *trust it selfe*, but God whom it relyes on, who is therefore called our *trust*. All the glori-

ous

ous things that are ſpoken of *truſt* are onely made good by God in Chriſt, who (as truſted) doth all for us. Cap. 19.

God hath preſcribed *truſt*, as the way to carry our ſoules to *himſelfe*, in whom we ſhould onely rely, and not in our imperfect *truſt* which hath its ebbing and flowing; Neither will *truſt* in God himſelfe for the *preſent* ſuffice us for *future* ſtrength and grace, as if *truſting* in God *to day*, would ſuffice to ſtrengthen us for *to morrow*; but wee muſt *renew* our truſt for *freſh* ſupply, upon every freſh *occaſion*. So that wee ſee God *alone* muſt be the *object* of our *truſt*.

There is ſtill left in mans nature a deſire of *pleaſure*, *profit*, and of what ever the *creature* preſents as *good*, but the deſire of gracious good is altogether loſt, the ſoule being wholy infected with a contrary taſte. Man hath a nature capable of *excellency*, and deſirous of it, and the Spirit of God *in* and *by the word* reveales where true excellency is to bee had; but corrupt nature *leaving God*, ſeeketh it elſewhere, and ſo croſſeth its owne

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owne desires, till the Spirit of God discovers where these things are to bee had, and so *nature* is brought to its right frame againe, by turning the streame into the right current; *Grace*, and *sinfull nature*, have the same generall *object* of comfort; onely *sinfull nature* seeks it in *broken Cisterns*, and *grace* in the *fountain*; the beginning of our true happinesse is from the discovery of *true* and *false* objects, so as the soule may cleerely see what is best and safest, and then stedfastly rely upon it.

We should labour to subdue the first inclination of our soules to the creatures.

It were an happy way to make the soule better acquainted with trusting in God, to labour to subdue at the *first* all unruly inclinations of the soule to earthly things, and to take advantage of the first tendernesse of the soule, to weede out that which is ill, and to plant *knowledge* and *love* of the best things in it; otherwise where affections to any thing below get much strength in the soule, it will by little and little be so overgrowne, that there will be no place left in it, either for (*object* or *act*) God or trust; God cannot come to take his

his place in the heart by *truſt*, but where the powers of the ſoule are brought under to regard *him* & thoſe great things hee brings with him, above all things elſe in the world beſide. Cap. 19.

In theſe glorious times wherein ſo great a *light* ſhineth, whereby ſo great things are diſcovered, what a ſhame is it to be ſo narrow hearted as to fixe upon *preſent* things; Our aymes and affections ſhould be ſutable to the things themſelves ſet before us; Our hearts ſhould be more and more *inlarged*, as things are more and more revealed to us; Wee ſee in the things of this life, as *wiſedome* and *experience* increaſeth, ſo our aimes and deſires increaſe likewiſe; A young beginner thinkes it a great matter if hee have a little to *begin withall*, but as he growes in *trading*, and ſeeth further wayes of getting, his thoughts and deſires are raiſed higher; *Children* thinke as *Children*, but riper age puts away childiſhneſſe, when their underſtandings are inlarged to ſee, what they did not ſee before; we ſhould never reſt till our hearts according to the 1 Cor. 13. 11.

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the measure of *revelation* of those excellent things which God hath for us, have answerable apprehension of the same. Oh if we had but faith to answer those glorious truths which God hath revealed, what manner of lives should we leade?

Cap. XX.

Of the method of trusting in God: and the tryall of that trust.

13. Our *trusting* should follow Gods order of promising.

LAstly, (to add no more) our *trusting* in God should follow Gods order in *promising*. The first promise is *of forgivenesse of sinne* to repentant beleevers: next 2. of *healing* and *sanctifying* grace: then 3. *the inheritance of the Kingdome of Heaven to them that are sanctifyed*: 4. and then the promises *of all things needfull in our way to the Kingdome*, &c. Now answerably, the soule being inlightned to see its danger, should looke *first* to Gods mercy in Christ *pardoning sinne*, because sinne onely divides betwixt God and the soule; *next*, to the

promises

promiſes of *grace* for the leading of a Chriſtian life, for true faith deſires *healing* mercy, as well as *pardoning* mercy, and then *to Heaven* and all things that may bring us thither. Cap. 20.

By all this wee ſee that it is not ſo eaſie a matter as the world takes it, to bring *God* and the *ſoule* together by *truſting* on him; It muſt be effected by the *mighty power* of God, *raiſing up* the ſoule to himſelfe, to lay hold upon the glorious power, goodneſſe, and other *excellencies* that are in *him*; God is not onely the *object*, but the working *cauſe* of our *truſt*; for ſuch is our proneneſſe to live by *ſenſe*, and naturall *reaſon*, and ſuch is the ſtrangeneſſe and height of *divine* things, ſuch our inclination to a *ſelfe-ſufficiency* and contentment in the *creature*, and ſo hard a matter is it to take off the ſoule from *falſe* bottomes, by reaſon of our unacquaintance with God and his wayes; beſides ſuch guilt ſtill remaines upon our ſoules for our rebellion and unkindneſſe towards God: that it makes us afraid to entertaine ſerious thoughts of him; and ſo Eph. 1. 20.

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great is the distance betwixt his *infinite* Majesty, (before whom the very *Angels* doe cover their faces) and *us*, by reason of the *unspiritualnesse* of our nature, being opposite to his most *absolute* purity, that wee cannot be brought to any *familiarity* with the Lord (so as to come into his holy presence with *confidence* to rely upon *him*, or any comfort to have communion with him,) till our hearts be sanctified and lifted up by *divine vigour* infused into them.

Though there be some *inclination* by reason of the remainder of the image of God in us, to an outward *morall* obedience of the *Law*, yet alas, we have not onely *no seeds* of *Evangelicall* truths and of faith to beleeve them, but an utter *contrariety* in our *natures* (as corrupted) either to this, or any other good. When our conscience is once awaked, we meditate nothing but *feares* and *terrours*, and dare not so much as think of an angry God, but rather how wee may escape and fly from him. Therefore together with a deepe consideration of the grounds wee have of *trusting* God, it is necessary

neceſſary wee ſhould thinke of the indiſpoſition of our hearts unto it, eſpecially when there is greateſt neede thereof, that ſo our hearts may be forced to put up that petition of the *Diſciples* to God; *Lord increaſe our faith, Lord helpe us againſt our unbeleeving hearts, &c.* By prayer and holy thoughts ſtirred up in the uſe of the meanes, we ſhall feele divine ſtrength infuſed and conveyed into our ſoules to *truſt*. Cap. 20.

The more care we ought to have to maintaine our truſt in God, becauſe (beſides the hardneſſe of it) it is a radicall and fundamentall grace; it is as it were the *mother root* and great *veyne*, whence the exerciſe of all graces have their beginning and ſtrength. The decay of a plant though it *appeares* firſt from the withering of the twigs and branches, yet it ariſes chiefly from a decay in the roote; So the decay of grace may appeare to the view firſt in our *company, carryage*, and *ſpeeches*, &c. but the primitive and originall ground of the ſame, is weakneſſe of *faith* in the heart; therefore it ſhould be our wiſe- Defects in *life* riſe from defects in *truſt*.

Cap. 20. dome (especially) to looke to the feeding of the *roote*; wee must 1. looke that our *principles* and *foundation* be good, and 2. build strongly upon them, and 3. *repaire* our building every day as continuall breaches shall be made upon us, either by *corruptions* and *temptations* from *within* or *without*; And wee shall finde that the maine breaches of our lives arise either from *false* principles, or doubts, or *mindlesnesse* of those that are true; All sin is a turning of the soule from God to some other seeming good, but this proceeds from a former turning of the soule from God by distrust. As faith is the first return of the soul to God, so the first degree of departing from God is by *infidelity*, and from thence comes a departure by *other sins*, by which (as sinne is of a winding nature) our unbeliefe more increaseth, and so the rent and breach betwixt our *soules* and *God* is made greater still, (which is that Sathan would have) till at length by departing further and further from him, wee come to have that peremptory sentence of *everlasting departure*

parture pronounced againſt us; ſo that our departure from God *now* is a degree to ſeparation *for ever* from him. Therefore it is Sathans maine care to come betweene *God* and the *Soule*, that ſo unlooſing us from God, we might more eaſily be drawne to *other things*; and if he drawes us to other things, it is but onely to unlooſe our hearts from God the more; for hee well knowes whileſt our ſoules cleave cloſe to God, there is no prevailing againſt us by any created policy or power. Cap. 20.

Sathans ſtudy is to unlooſe our hearts frō God.

It was the curſed policy of *Balaam* to adviſe *Balak* to draw the people from *God* (by *fornication*) that ſo God might be drawne from them: the ſinne of their baſe *affections* crept into the very ſpirits of their minde, and drew them from God to Idolatry: Bodily *adultery* makes way for *ſpirituall*; An unbeleeving heart is an ill heart, and a treacherous heart, becauſe it makes us to *depart from God*, the *living* God, &c. Therefore wee ſhould eſpecially take heed of it as wee love our lives, yea our beſt life which ariſeth from the union

Heb. 3. 12.

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union of our soules with God.

None so opposed as a *Christian*, and in a Christian nothing so opposed as his *faith*, because it opposeth whatsoever opposes God, both *within* and *without* us: it captivates and brings under whatsoever rises up against GOD in the heart, and sets it selfe against whatsoever makes head against the soule.

And because mistake is very dangerous, and wee are prone to conceive that to *trust in God* is an easie matter, therefore it is needfull that wee should have a right conceit of this *trust* what it is, and how it may be discerned, lest wee trust to an untrusty *trust*, and to an unsteady stay.

What trust in God is.

We may by what hath been said before, partly discerne the *nature* of it, to be nothing else but an exercise of faith, whereby looking to God in Christ through the *promises*, wee take off our soules from all other supports, and lay them upon God for deliverance and upholding in all *ill*, *present* or *future*, felt or feared, and the obtaining of all *good*,

good, which GOD sees expedient for us. Cap. 20.

Now that we may discerne the *truth* of our *trust in God* the better, wee must know, that true trust is *willing* to bee *tryed* and searched, and can say to God as *David*, *Now Lord what wait I for, my hope is in thee*; and as it is willing to come to tryall, so it is able to endure tryall, and to hold out in opposition, as appeares in *David*; If faith hath a *promise*, it will rely and rest upon it, say flesh and bloud what it can to the contrary; true faith is as large as the *promise*, and will take Gods part against whatsoever opposes it. The tryall of *trust*. 1. It *can* and is *willing* to endure tryall. Psal. 39. 7.

And as faith singles not out one part of divine truth to beleeve and rejects another, so it relyes upon God for every good thing *one* as well as *another*; the ground whereof is this, The same love of God that intends us heaven, intends us a supply of all necessaries that may bring us thither. 2. It looks to all the promises.

A child that beleeves his father will make him *Heire*, doubts not but he will provide him food and nourishment, *Fides non eligit objectum.*

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and give him breeding ſutable to his future condition; It is a vaine pretence to beleeve that God will give us heaven, and yet leave us to ſhift for our ſelves in the way.

3. It makes the ſoule bold, 1.

Where *truſt* is rightly planted, it gives *boldneſſe* to the ſoule in going to God, for it is grounded upon the diſcovery of Gods love firſt to us, and ſeeth a warrant from him for whatſoever it truſts him for; though the things themſelves be never ſo great, yet they are no greater than God is willing to beſtow; againe, *truſt* is bold becauſe it is grounded upon the worthineſſe of a *Mediator* who hath made way to Gods favour for us, and appeares now in heaven to maintain it towards us.

4. yet hũble.

Yet this boldneſſe is with *humility*, which carryes the ſoule out of it ſelfe; and that *boldneſſe* which the ſoule by truſt hath with God, is from God himſelfe; it hath nothing to alleadge from it ſelfe but its owne emptineſſe and Gods fulneſſe, its owne ſinfulneſſe and Gods mercy, its owne humble obedience, and Gods command; hence it is that the true

true beleevers heart is not lifted up, nor ſwels with *ſelfe confidence*; as truſt comes *in* that goes *out*; truſt is never planted and growes but in an humble and low ſoule; truſt is a holy *motion* of the ſoule to God, and motion ariſes from want; thoſe (and thoſe only) ſeek out abroad that want ſuccour at home; *Plants* move not from place to place becauſe they finde nouriſhment where they ſtand; but *living* creatures ſeeke abroad for their food, and for that end have a power of moving from place to place; and this is the reaſon why *truſt* is expreſſed by *going* to God. Cap. 20. *Motus ex indigentia.*

Hereupon *truſt* is a *dependant* grace anſwerable to our dependant condition; it lookes upon all things it hath or deſires to have, as comming from God and his free grace and power; it deſireth not onely *wiſedome*, but to be wiſe in *his* wiſdome, to ſee in *his* light, to be *ſtrong* in *his* ſtrength, the thing it ſelfe contents not this grace of *truſt*, but Gods bleſſing and love in the thing, it cares not for any thing further than it can have it with Gods favour and good liking. 5. Truſt is dependant

Hence

Cap. 20. 6. and obsequious.

Hence it is that *trust* is an obsequious and an observing grace, stirring up the soule to a desire of pleasing God in all things, and to a feare of displeasing him; Hee that pretends to trust the Lord in a course of offending, may trust to this that God will meet him in another way than hee lookes for: Hee that is a tenant at *curtesie* will not offend his Lord; hence it is that the Apostle inforceth that exhortation to *work out our salvation with feare and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. because it is God that worketh the *will* and the *deed*, and according to *his good pleasure*, not *ours*; Therefore *faith* is an effectuall working *grace*, it workes in Heaven with God, it workes *within us* commanding all the powers of the soule, it workes *without us* conquering whatsoever is in the world on the *right hand* to draw us from God, or *on the left* hand to discourage us; it works against *Hell* and the powers of darknesse; and all by vertue of *trusting* as it draweth strength from God; It stirres up all other graces and keepes them in exercise, and thereupon the acts of other

ther graces are attributed to *faith* as *Heb.* 11. It breeds a holy jealousie over our selves, lest wee give God just cause to stop the influence of his grace towards us, so to let us see that wee stand not by our owne strength: Those that take liberty in things they either *know* or *doubt* will displease God, shew they want the *feare* of God, and this want of feare shewes their want of *dependancy*, and therefore want of *trust*; dependancy is alwayes very respective, it studieth contentment and care to comply; this was it made *Enoch walke with God, and study how to please him*; when wee know nothing can doe us good or hurt but *God*, it drawes our chiefe care to approve our selves to him. Obedience of *faith* and obedience of life will goe together; and therefore hee that commits his soule to God to *save*, will commit his soule to God to sanctifie and *guide* in a way of well pleasing: Not onely the *tame*, but the most savage *creatures*, will bee at the beck of those that feede them, though they are ready to fall violently upon others; disobedience

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Heb. 12. 5.

1 Pet. 4.

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7. It serveth Gods providence in the use of meanes.

bedience therefore is against the principles of *nature*.

This *dependancy* is either in the use of meanes, or else when meanes faile us; true *dependancy* is exactly carefull of all meanes. When God hath set downe a course of meanes, wee must not expect that God should alter his ordinary course of providence for us; deserved *disappointment* is the fruit of this presumptuous confidence; the more wee depend on a wise Physitian, the more wee will observe his *directions*, and bee carefull to use what hee prescribes; yet we must use the meanes *as meanes*, and not set them in Gods room, for that is the way to blast our hopes; The way to have any thing taken away and not blest, is to *set our heart* too much *upon* it. Too much griefe in parting with any thing, shewes too much trust in the enjoying of it; and therefore hee that uses the meanes in *faith* will alwayes joyne *prayer* unto God, from whom as *every good thing comes*, so likewise doth the *blessing* and successe thereof; where much indeavour is and little seeking

seeking to God, it shewes there is little trust; the *Widdow* that trusted in God, *continued* likewise *in prayers day and night.* Cap. 20. 1 Tim. 5. 5.

The best discovery of our not relying too much on meanes, is, when all meanes faile, if we can still relye upon God, as being still where hee was, and hath wayes of his owne for helping of us, either immediately from *himselfe*, or by setting aworke *other* meanes (and those perhaps very *unlikely*) such as we think not of. God hath wayes of his *owne.* Abraham never honoured God more, than when he trusted in God for *a son* against the course of nature, and when hee had a son, was ready to *sacrifice him*, upon confidence that God would raise him from the dead againe. This was the *ground* upon which *Daniell* with such great authority reproved *Balthazar* that he had not a care *to glorifie God*, in whose hand *his breath was, and all his wayes.* The greatest honour we can doe unto God, is when wee see *nothing*, but rather all contrary to that we looke for, *then* to shut our eyes to inferiour Gen. 22 2. Dan. 5. 23.

Cap. 20. inferiour things below and looke altogether upon his *Al-ſufficiency*; God can convey himſelfe more comfortably to us when he pleaſeth *without* means than *by* meanes. True *truſt* as it ſets God higheſt in the ſoule, ſo in *danger* and *wants* it hath preſent recourſe to him, as the *Conies* to the *Rockes*.

Pro. 30. 26.

8. It runs not before *God*

And becauſe Gods times and ſeaſons are the beſt, it is an evidence of true *truſt* when wee can waite Gods leiſure, and not make haſte and ſo runne before God; for elſe the *more* haſte the *worſe* ſpeed; God ſeldome makes any promiſe to his Children, but hee exerciſeth their truſt in *waiting* long before, as *David* for a *Kingdome*, *Abraham* for a *ſonne*, the *whole world* for *Chriſts comming*, *&c.*

9. It ſtils and quiets the ſoule upon good grounds.

One maine evidence of true *truſt* in God *is here in the text*, wee ſee here it hath a *quieting* and ſtilling vertue, for it ſtayes the ſoule upon the fulneſſe of Gods *love* joyned with his ability to ſupply our wants and releeve our neceſſities, though faith doth not (at the firſt eſpecially) ſo ſtay the ſoule, as to take

take away all ſuſpitious feares of the contrary: There be ſo many things in trouble that preſſe upon the ſoule, as hinder the joyning of God and it together, yet the prevailing of our unbeliefe is taken away, the raigne of it is broken. If the touch of Chriſt in his abaſement on earth drew vertue from him, certain it is that *faith* cannot touch Chriſt in heaven, but it will draw a quieting and ſanctifying vertue from him, which will in ſome meaſure ſtop the iſſues of an unquiet ſpirit; the Needle in the Compaſſe will ſtand North, though with ſome trembling. Cap. 20.

A Ship that lyes at Anchor may bee ſomething toſſed, but yet it ſtil remains ſo faſtned, that it cannot be carryed away by winde or weather; the ſoule after it hath caſt anchor upon God, may (as wee ſee here in *David*) be diſquieted a while, but this unſetling tends to a deeper ſetling; the more we *beleeve*, the more we are *eſtabliſhed*; faith is an eſtabliſhing grace, *by faith wee ſtand*, and ſtand *faſt*, and are able to withſtand whatſoever oppoſeth us. For what can ſtand

Cap. 20. ſtand againſt God, upon whoſe truth and power *faith* relyes? The devill feares not us, but *him* whom we flie unto for ſuccour; It is the ground wee ſtand on ſecures us, not our ſelves.

As it is our happineſſe, ſo it muſt be our endeavour to bring the ſoule cloſe to God, that nothing get betweene, for then the ſoule hath no ſure footing. When we ſtep from God, Sathan ſteps in by ſome temptation or other preſently. It requires a great deale of *ſelf-deniall*, to bring a ſoule either ſwelling with *carnall confidence*, or ſinking by fear and *diſtruſt*, to lie levell upon God, and cleave faſt to him; Square will lie faſt upon Square; but our hearts are ſo full of unevenneſſe, that God hath much adoe to ſquare our hearts fit for him, notwithſtanding the ſoule hath no reſt without this.

The uſe of *truſt* is beſt knowne in the worſt times, for naturally in ſickneſſe we truſt to the Phyſitian, in want to our wit and ſhifts, in danger to policy and the arme of fleſh, in plenty to our preſent ſupply, &c. but when wee have

have nothing in view, then indeed should God bee *God* unto us. In times of distresse, when hee shewes himselfe in the wayes of his mercy and goodnesse, then we should especially magnifie his name, which will move him to discover his excellencies the more, the more wee take notice of them. And therefore *David* strengthens himselfe in these words that hee hoped for better times, wherein God would shew himselfe more gracious to him, because he resolved *to praise him.* Cap. 20.

This trusting joynts the soule again, and sets it in its own true resting place, and sets God in his owne place in the soule, that is, the highest; and the creature in its place which is to bee under God, as in its owne nature, so in our hearts. This is to ascribe *honour due unto God*, the onely way to bring peace into the soule: Thus if wee can bring our hope and trust to the God of hope, and trust, we shall stand impregnable in all assaults, as will best appeare in these particulars. Psal. 29. 2.

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Cap. XXI.

Of quieting the ſpirit in troubles for ſinne. And objections anſwered.

TO begin with troubles of the ſpirit, which indeed are the ſpirit of troubles, as diſabling that which ſhould uphold a man in all his troubles. A ſpirit ſet in tune, and aſſiſted by a higher ſpirit, will ſtand out againſt ordinary aſſaults, but when God (the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh) ſhall ſeem contrary to our ſpirits, whence then ſhall wee finde reliefe?

Here all is ſpirituall, God a *Spirit*, the ſoule a *ſpirit*, the terrours *ſpirituall*, the devill who joynes with theſe a *ſpirit*; yea, that which the ſoule feares for the time to come, is *ſpirituall*, and not onely ſpirituall, but *eternall*, unleſſe it pleaſeth God at length to break out of the thick cloud, wherewith hee covers himſelfe, and ſhine upon the ſoule, as in his owne time he will.

In this eſtate, comforts themſelves are uncomfortable to the ſoule; it quarrels

quarrels with every thing, the better things it heares of, the more it is vexed. Oh what is this to mee, what have I to doe with these comforts, the more happinesse may bee had, the more is my griefe; As for comforts from Gods inferiour blessings, as *friends*, *children*, *estate*, &c. the soule is ready to misconstrue Gods end in all, as not intending any good to him thereby. Cap. 21.

In this condition God doth not appeare in his own shape to the soule, but in the shape of an enemy; and when God seemes against us, who shall stand for us? Our blessed Saviour in his agony had the *Angels* to comfort him; but had he beene a meere man. and not assisted by the Godhead, it was not the comfort (no not) of Angels that could have upheld him, in the sense of his fathers withdrawing his countenance from him. Alas then what will become of us in such a case if we be not supported by a *spirit of power* and the power of an almighty Spirit?

Nihil est tentatio vel universi mundi & totius inferni in unum conflata, ad eā qua Deus contrarius homini ponitur. Luther

If all the temptations of the whole world, and hell it selfe were mustered

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together, they were nothing to this, whereby the great God sets himselfe contrary to his poore creature. None can conceive so, but those that have felt it. If the hiding of his face will so trouble the soule, what will his frowne and angry looke doe? Needs must the soule bee in a wofull plight, when as God seemes not onely to bee absent from it, but an enemy to it. When a man sees no comfort from above, and lookes inward and sees lesse, when hee lookes about him, and sees nothing but evidences of Gods displeasure; beneath him, and sees nothing but desperation, clouds without, and clouds within, nothing but clouds in his condition here, hee had need of faith to break through all, and see Sunne through the thickest cloud.

Tentatio blasphemiarum.

Upon this, the distressed soule is in danger to be set upon by a *temptation*, called the temptation of *blasphemy*, that is, to entertaine bitter thoughts against God, and especially against the grace and goodnesse of God, wherein he desires to make himselfe most knowne to

to his creature. In thoſe that have wilfully reſiſted divine truths made knowne unto them, and after taſte, deſpiſed them, a perſwaſion that God hath forſaken them, ſet on ſtrongly by Sathan, hath a worſe effect, it ſtirs up a helliſh hatred againſt God, carrying them to a revengefull deſire of oppoſing whatſoever is Gods, though not alwayes openly (for then they ſhould loſe the advantage of doing hurt,), yet ſecretly and ſubtilly, and under pretence of the contrary. To this degree of *blaſphemy* Gods children never fall, yet they may feele the venome of corruption ſtirring in their hearts, againſt God and his wayes which he takes with them; and this addes greatly to the depth of their affliction, when afterward they think with themſelves what helliſh ſtuffe they carry in their ſoules. This is not ſo much diſcerned in the temptation, but after the fit is ſomewhat remitted. Cap. 21.

In this kinde of deſertion, ſeconded with this kinde of temptation, the way is to call home the ſoule, and to check

Cap. 21. it, and charge it to truſt in God, even though he ſhewes himſelfe an enemy, for it is but a *ſhew*, hee doth but put on a maſke with a purpoſe to reveale himſelfe the more graciouſly afterward; his manner is to work by contraries. In this condition God lets in ſome few beames of light, whereby the ſoule caſts a longing looke upon God, even when hee ſeemes to forſake it; it will with Jon. 2. 4. *Ionas* in the belly of hell, looke back to the holy Temple of God, it will ſteale a looke unto Chriſt. Nothing more comfortable in this condition, than to flye to him, that by experience knew what this kinde of forſaking meant, for this very end that hee might be the fitter to ſuccour us in the like diſtreſſe.

Learne therefore to appeale from God to God, oppoſe his gracious nature, his ſweet promiſes to ſuch as *are* Iſay 50. 10 *in darkneſſe, and ſee no light*, inviting them to truſt in him, though there appeare to the eye of ſenſe and reaſon nothing but darkneſſe: Here make uſe of that ſweet Relation of God in Chriſt, becomming a Father to us: *Doubtleſſe thou*

thou art our Father: fleſh would make a doubt of it, and thou ſeemeſt to hide thy face from us, yet *doubtleſſe* thou art our Father, and haſt in former time ſhewed thy ſelfe to be ſo, wee will not leave thee till wee have a bleſſing from thee, till wee have a kinder looke from thee: This *wraſtling* will prevaile at length, and wee ſhall have ſuch a ſight of him, as ſhall bee an encouragement for the time to come, when *we ſhall be able to comfort others, with thoſe comforts whereby we have been refreſhed our ſelves.* With the Saints caſe remember the Saints courſe, which is *to truſt in God.* So Chriſt the Head of the Church commits himſelf to that God, whoſe favour for the preſent he felt not; So *Iob* reſolves upon *truſt* though God ſhould *kill him.* Cap. 21. Eſa. 63. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 4.

But theſe holy perſons were not troubled with the guilt of any particular ſinne, but I feele the juſt diſpleaſure of God kindled againſt me for many and great offences. Obiect.

True it is, that ſinne is not ſo ſweet in the committing, as it is heavy and bitter in the reckoning. When *Adam* Anſw.

Cap. 21. had once offended God, *Paradise* it selfe was not Paradise to him. The presence of God which was most comfortable before, was now his greatest terrour, had not God out of his free infinite and preventing mercy come betwixt him and hell, by the promise of
1 Cor. 5. 21 the blessed seed. This seed was *made sin* to satisfie for sin; sin *passive* in himselfe to satisfie for sin *active* in us.

When God once charges sinne upon the soule, Alas who shall take it off? When the great God shall frowne, the smiles of the creature cannot refresh us. Sinne makes us afraid of that which should be our greatest comfort; it puts a sting into every other evill, upon the seazing of any evill, either of bodie, soule, or condition, the guilty soule is imbittered and enraged; for from that which it feeles, it fore-speakes to it selfe worse to come. It interprets all that befalls, as the messengers of an angry God, sent in displeasure to take revenge upon it. This weakneth the cou-
Psal. 38. rage, wasteth the spirits, and blasteth the beauty even of Gods dearest ones.

There

There is not the ſtouteſt man breathing, but if God ſets his conſcience againſt him, it will pull him downe, and lay him flat, and fill him with ſuch inward terrors, as he ſhall be more afraid of himſelfe, than of all the world beſide. This were a dolefull caſe, if God had not provided in Chriſt a remedy for this great evill of evils, and if the holy Spirit were not above the conſcience, able as well to pacifie it by the ſenſe of Gods love in Chriſt, as to convince it of ſinne, and the juſt deſert thereby. Cap. 21.

But my ſins are not the ſins of an ordinary man, my ſpots are not as the ſpots of the reſt of Gods children. Object.

Conceive of Gods mercy as no ordinary mercy, and Chriſts obedience as no ordinary obedience. There is ſomething in the very greatneſſe of ſin, that may encourage us to goe to God, for the greater our ſinnes are, the greater the glory of his powerfull mercy in pardoning, and his powerfull grace in healing will appeare. The great God delights to ſhew his greatneſſe in the greateſt Anſw.

Cap. 21. greateſt things; Even men glory, when they are put upon that, which may ſet forth their worth in any kinde. GOD Mic 7.18. *delighteth* in mercy, it *pleaſeth him* (nothing ſo well) as being his chiefe *Name*, which then we take in *vaine*, when wee are not moved by it to come unto him.

That which Sathan would uſe as an argument to drive us from God, wee ſhould uſe as a ſtrong plea with him. Lord, the greater my ſins are, the greater will be the glory of thy pardoning mercy. *David* after his hainous ſinnes, cries not for *mercy*, but for *abundance* of Pſal. 51. mercy, *according to the multitude of thy mercies, doe away mine offences*: his mercy is not only above his *own* works, but above ours too. If wee could ſin more than he could pardon, then wee might have ſome reaſon to deſpaire. Deſpaire is a high point of *Atheiſme*, it takes away God and Chriſt both at once. *Iudas* in betraying our Saviour, was an occaſion of his death as *man*, but in deſpairing hee did what lay in him to take away his life as *God*.

When therefore *Conſcience* joyning with

with Sathan, ſets out thy ſinne in its colours, labour thou by faith to ſet out *God* in his colours, infinite in mercy and loving kindneſſe. Here lies the art of a Chriſtian; It is divine Rhetorick thus to perſwade and ſet downe the ſoule. Thy ſinnes are great, but *Adams* was greater, who being ſo newly advanced above all the creatures, and taken into ſo neare an acquaintance with God, and having ability to perſiſt in that condition if hee would, yet willingly overthrew himſelfe and all his whole poſterity, by yeelding to a temptation, which though high (as being promiſed to bee like unto God,) yet ſuch as hee ſhould and might have reſiſted; No ſinne wee can commit, can be a ſinne of ſo tainting and ſpreading a nature, yet as he fell by *diſtruſt*, ſo he was recovered by *truſting*, and ſo muſt we by relying on a ſecond *Adam*, whoſe obedience and righteouſneſſe *from thence raignes*, to the taking away not onely of that one ſinne of *Adam*, and ours in him, *but of all*, and not onely to the pardon of all ſinne, but to a right of everlaſting

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Rom. 5. 17.

Cap. 21. Gods mercy not to be limited.

lasting life. The Lord thinkes himselfe disparaged, when wee have no higher thoughts of *his mercy*, than of our *sins*, when we bring God downe to our Model, when as, *the heavens are not so much higher than the earth, than his thoughts of love and goodnesse, are above the thoughts of our unworthinesse.* It is a kinde of taking away the Almighty, to limit his boundlesse mercy in Christ, within the narrow scantling of our apprehension; yet *infidelity* doth this, which should stirre up in us a loathing of *it* above all other sinnes. But this is Sathans fetch, when once he hath brought us into sins against the *Law*, then to bring us into sinnes of a higher nature, and deeper danger, even against the blessed *Gospell*, that so there may be no remedy, but that mercy it selfe might condemne us.

Isay 55. 8.

All the aggravations, that conscience and Sathan helping it, are able to raise sinne unto, cannot rise to that degree of infiniteneſſe, that Gods mercy in Christ is of. If there be a *spring* of sin in us, there is a spring of mercy in him, and a fountaine opened daily to wash

our

our ſelves in. If we ſin *oft*, let us doe as S. *Paul*, who *prayed* oft *againſt the prick of the fleſh*. If it be a devill of long continuance, yet faſting and prayer will drive him out at length. Cap. 21. Zac. 13. 1.

Nothing keepes the ſoule more downe, than ſinnes of long continuance, becauſe corruption of nature hath gotten ſuch ſtrength in them, as *nature* is added *to nature*, and cuſtome doth ſo determine and ſway the ſoule one way, that men thinke it impoſſible to recover themſelves, they ſee one linke of ſin draw on another, all making a chain to faſten them to deſtruction, they thinke of neceſſity they muſt be damned becauſe cuſtome hath bred a neceſſity of ſinning in them, and conceive of the promiſe of mercy, as only made to ſuch as turne from their ſinfull courſes, in which they ſee themſelves ſo hardened, that they cannot repent. Iſay 55 8. Sinnes of continuance dangerous.

Certaine it is, the condition is moſt lamentable, that yeelding unto ſinne brings men unto. Men are carefull to prevent dangerous ſickneſſes of *body*, and the danger of law concerning their *eſtates*;

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eſtates; but ſeldome conſider into what a miſerable plight their ſinnes which they ſo willingly give themſelves up unto, will bring them in. If they doe not periſh in their ſins, yet their yeelding will bring them into ſuch a dolefull condition, that they would give the whole world, if they were poſſeſſours of it, to have their ſpirits at freedome from this bondage and feare.

How to deale with ſuch, as have lived long in ſinne.

To ſuch as bleſſe themſelves in an ill way upon hope of mercy, wee dare not ſpeake a word of comfort, becauſe God doth not, but threatens, his wrath ſhall burne to hell againſt them. Yet becauſe while life continnes there may be as a *ſpace*, ſo a *place*, and *grace* for repentance, theſe muſt be dealt withall in ſuch a maner, as they may be ſtayed and ſtopped in their dangerous courſes, there muſt be a ſtop before a turne.

And when their conſciences are throughly awaked with ſenſe of their danger, let them ſeriouſly conſider whither ſin, and Sathan by ſin is carrying of them, and lay to heart the juſtice of God, ſtanding before them as an Angell

gell with a drawne ſword, ready to fall upon them if they poſt on ſtill. Cap. 21.

Yet to keep them from utter ſinking, let them conſider withall, the unlimited mercy of God, as not limited to any perſon, or any ſinne, ſo not to any time; there is no preſcription of time can binde God, his mercy hath no certaine date that will expire, ſo as thoſe that fly unto it, ſhall have no benefit. Invincible mercy will never be conquered, and endleſſe goodneſſe never admits of bounds or end.

Bonitas invicti non vincitur, & infinita miſerecordia non finitur. Fulgent.

What kinde of people were thoſe that followed Chriſt, were they not ſuch as had lived long in their ſinfull courſes? He did not onely raiſe them that were newly dead, but *Lazarus* that had lyen *foure dayes in the grave*. They thought Chriſts power in raiſing the dead, had reached to a ſhort time onely, but hee would let them know, that hee could as well raiſe thoſe that had been *long* as lately dead. If Chriſt be the Phyſitian, it is no matter of how long continuance the diſeaſe be. Hee is good at all kinde of diſeaſes, and will not

Cap. 21. not endure the reproach of disability to cure any. Some diseases are the reproaches of other Physitians, as being above their skill to help, but no conceit more dangerous when we are to deale with Christ.

"The blessed Martyr *Bilney* was "much offended when he heard an elo- "quent Preacher inveighing against "sinne, saying thus, Behold, thou hast "lyen rotten in thy owne lusts, by the "space of sixty yeares, even as a beast "in his owne dung, and wilt thou pre- "sume in one yeare to goe forward to- "wards heaven, and that in thine olde "age, as much as thou wentest back- "ward from heaven to hell in sixty "yeares? Is not this a goodly argu- "men (saith *Bilney*?) Is this preach- "ing of repentance in the name of Je- "sus? It is as if Christ had dyed in "vaine for such a man, and that hee "must make satisfaction for himselfe. "If I had heard (saith he) such preach- "ing of repentance in times past, I had "utterly despaired of mercy: We must never thinke the doore of hope to bee shut

ſhut againſt us, if we have a purpoſe to turne unto God. As there is nothing more injurious to Chriſt, ſo nothing more fooliſh and groundleſſe than to *diſtruſt*, it being the chiefe ſcope of God in his word to draw our truſt to him in Chriſt, in whom is alwayes open a breaſt of mercy for humbled ſinners to fly unto. Cap. 21.

But thus far the conſideration of our long time ſpent in the devils ſervice ſhould prevaile with us, as to take more ſhame to our ſelves, ſo to reſolve more ſtrongly for God and his wayes, and to account it more than ſufficient that wee have ſpent already, ſo much precious time to ſo ill purpoſes; and the leſſe time wee have, to make the more haſte, to worke for God, and bring all the honour wee can to Religion in ſo little a ſpace. Oh how doth it grieve thoſe that have felt the gracious power of Chriſt in converting their ſoules, that ever they ſhould ſpend the ſtrength of their parts in the worke of his and their enemie. And might they live longer, it is their full purpoſe for ever to

Cap. 21.

renounce their former waies. There is bred in them an eternall desire of pleasing God, as in the wicked there is an eternall desire of offending him, which eternity of desires God looks to in both of them, and rewards them accordingly, though he cuts off the thred of their lives.

But God in wisdome will have the conversions of such as have gone on in a course of sinning (especially after light revealed) to be rare and difficult. Birthes in those that are ancienter, are with greater danger than in the younger sort. God will take a course, that his grace shall not be turned into wantonnesse. He oft holds such upon the rack of a troubled conscience, that they and others may feare to buy the pleasure of sinne at such a rate. Indeed where *sinne* abounds, there *grace* superabounds, but then it is where sinne that abounded in the *life*, abounds in the *conscience* in griefe and detestation of it, as the greatest evill. Christ groaned at the raising of *Lazarus*, which he did not at others, because that though to an Almighty power

Cavendum est vulnus, quod dolore curatur.

power all things are alike easie, yet hee will shew that there be degrees of difficulties in the things themselves, and make it appeare to us that it is so. Therefore those that have enjoyed long the sweet of sinne, may expect the bitterest sorrow and repentance for sinne. Cap. 21.

Yet never give place to thoughts of *despaire*, as comming from him that would overturne the end of the Gospell, which layes open the riches of Gods mercy in Christ, which riches none set out more than those that have beene *the greatest of sinners*, as wee see in *Paul*. Wee cannot exalt God more than by taking notice; and making use of that great designe of infinite wisedome in reconciling justice and mercy together, so as *now* he is not onely mercifull, but *just in pardoning sinnes*. Our Saviour as he came towards the latter age of the world, when all things seemed desperate, so hee comes to some men in the latter part of their dayes. The mercy shewed to *Zacheus*, and the *good theefe* was personall, but the comfort intend- Rom. 3. 26.

Cap. 21. ed by Christ was publike, therefore *still still trust in God.*

In this case wee must goe to God, with whom all things are possible, to put forth his Almighty power, not only in the pardoning, but in subduing our iniquities. He that can make a *Camell* goe through a *needles eye*, can make a high conceited man lowly, a rich man humble. Therefore never question his power, much lesse his willingnesse, when hee is not onely ready to receive us when we returne, but perswades and intreates us to come in unto him, yea after *back-sliding* and false dealing with him, wherein he allowes no mercy to be shewed by man, yet he will take liberty to shew mercy himselfe.

Ier. 3. 2.

Object. *But I have often relapsed and fallen into the same sin againe and againe.*

Answ. If Christ will have us pardon our brother seaventy seaven times, can wee thinke that hee will enjoyne us more, then he will be ready to doe himselfe, when in case of shewing mercy hee would have us thinke his thoughts to be farre above ours? *Adam* lost all by once

once ſinning, but we are under a better covenant, a covenant of mercy, and are encouraged by the Sonne to goe to the Father every day for the ſinnes of that day. Cap. 21.

Where the worke of grace is begun, ſin loſes ſtrength by every new fall; for hence iſſues deeper humility, ſtronger hatred, freſh indignation againſt our ſelves, more experience of the deceitfulneſſe of our hearts, renewed reſolutions untill ſin be brought under. That ſhould not drive us from God, which God would have us make uſe of, to flye the rather to him, ſince there is a throne of grace ſet up in Jeſus Chriſt we may boldly make uſe of, and let us be aſhamed to ſinne, and not aſhamed to glorifie Gods mercy in begging pardon for ſinne. Nothing will make us more aſhamed to ſin, then thoughts of ſo free and large mercy. It will grieve an ingenuous ſpirit to offend ſo good a God. Ah that there ſhould be ſuch an heart in me, as to tire the patience of God, and damme up his goodneſſe, as much as in me lyes; but this is our com-

Cap. 21. fort, that the plea of mercy from a broken ſpirit to a gracious Father, will ever hold good. When wee are at the loweſt in this world, yet there are theſe three grounds of comfort ſtill remaining. 1. That wee are not yet in the place of the damned, whoſe eſtate is unalterable. 2. That whileſt we live, there is time and ſpace for recovering of our ſelves. 3. That there is grace offered, if wee will not ſhut our hearts againſt it.

Object. *O, but every one hath his time, my good houre may be paſt.*

Anſw. That is counſell to thee, it is not paſt if thou canſt raiſe up thy heart to God, and embrace his goodneſſe. Shew by thy yeelding unto mercy, that thy time of mercy is not yet out, rather than by concluding uncomfortably, willingly betray thy ſelfe to thy greateſt enemy, enforcing that upon thy ſelfe, which God labours to draw thee from. As in the ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt, *feare* ſhewes that wee have not committed it: So in this, a tender heart fearing leſt our time bee paſt, ſhewes

shewes plainly that it is not past. Cap. 21.

Looke upon examples, when the Prodigall in his forlorne condition was going to his Father, his *Father* stayed not for him, but *meets him* in the way, Luke 15. he did not onely goe, but *ranne* to meet him. God is more willing to entertaine us, than we are to cast our selves upon him. As there is *a fountaine opened for sinne, and for uncleannesse,* so it is a *living* fountaine of living *water*, that runnes for ever, and can never bee drawne dry.

Here remember, that I build not a shelter for the presumptuous, but onely open an harbour for the truly humbled soule, to put himselfe into. *Caution.*

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Cap. XXII.

Of ſorow for ſin, and hatred of ſinne, when right and ſufficient. Helps thereto.

Obiect. *AH, there's my miſery. If I could be humbled for ſin, I might hope for mercy, but I never yet knew what a broke heart meant, this ſoule of mine was never as yet ſenſible of the griefe and ſmart of ſin, how then can I expect any comfort?*

Anſw. 1. It is one of Sathans policies, to hold us in a dead and barren condition, by following us with conceits, that wee have not ſorowed in proportion to our offences. True it is, we ſhould labour that our ſorow might in ſome meaſure anſwer to the haynouſneſſe of our ſins: but we muſt know *ſorrow* is not required for it ſelfe in that degree as *faith* is: If we could truſt in God without much ſorow for our ſins, then it would not be required, for God delights not in our ſorow as ſorow, God in mercy both requires it and workes it, as thereby making us capable veſſels of mercy, fit to acknowledge, value, and walke worthy of

Sorow not required for it ſelfe as ſorow.

of Christ; he requires it as it is a meanes to imbitter sinne, and the delightfull pleasures thereof unto us, and by that meanes bring us to a right judgement of our selves, and the creature, with which sinne commits spirituall adultery, that so wee may recover our taste before lost. And then, when with the Prodigall wee returne unto our selves (having lost our selves before) we are fit to judge of the baseneſſe of sin, and of the worth of mercy; and so upon grounds of right reason, bee willing to alter our condition, and embrace mercy upon any tearms it shall please Christ to injoyne. Cap. 22.

Secondly, if we could grieve and cast downe our selves beneath the earth, as low as the nethermost pit, yet this would be no satisfaction to God for sin; of it selfe, it is rather an enterance, and beginning of hell. *Anſ.* 2. The greatest sorrow can make no satisfaction for sinne.

Thirdly, we must search what is the cause of this want of griefe which wee complaine of; whether it be not a secret cleaving to the creature, and too much contentment in it, which oft stealeth *Anſ.* 3.

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leth away the heart from God, and brings in ſuch contentment, as is ſubject to faile and deceive us, whereupon from diſcontentment, we grieve, which griefe (being carnall) hinders griefe of a better kinde.

Cauſes of our want of griefe for ſinne.

Uſually the cauſes of our want of griefe for ſin are theſe. Firſt, a want of ſerious conſideration, and dwelling long enough upon the cauſe of griefe, which ſprings either from an unſetledneſſe of nature, or diſtractions from things without. Moveable diſpoſitions are not long affected with any thing. One maine uſe of croſſes, is to take off the ſoule from that it is dangerouſly ſet upon, and to fixe our running ſpirits. For though griefe for croſſes hinder ſpirituall griefe, yet worldly delights hinder more. That griefe is leſſe diſtant from true griefe, and therefore neerer to be turned into it.

1. Want of conſideration.

Vſe of croſſes.

2. Want of a divine worke.

And put caſe wee could call off our mindes from other things, and ſet them on griefe for our ſinnes, yet it is onely Gods Spirit that can worke our hearts to this griefe, and for this end, perhaps

perhaps God holds us off from it, to teach us, that hee is the teacher of the heart to grieve. And thereupon it is our duty to waite, till hee reveale our ſelves ſo far to our ſelves, as to ſtir up this affection in us. Cap. 22.

Another cauſe may bee a kinde of doubleneſſe of heart, whereby wee would bring two things together that cannot ſuite. We would grieve for ſin ſo far as wee thinke it an evidence of a good condition: but then, becauſe it is an irkſome taſke, and becauſe it cannot be wrought without ſevering our heart from thoſe ſweet delights it is ſet upon: hence wee are loath God ſhould take that courſe to worke griefe, which croſſeth our diſpoſition. The ſoule muſt therefore by ſelfe-deniall bee brought to ſuch a degree of *ſincerity* and *ſimplicity*, as to be willing to give God leave to worke *this ſorrow, not to be ſorrowed for*, by what way hee himſelfe pleaſeth. But here we muſt remember againe, that this *ſelfe-deniall*, is not of our ſelves, but of God, who onely can take us out of our ſelves, and if our hearts 3. A kinde of doubleneſs of heart. Self-denial 2 Cor. 7. 10.

Cap. 22. hearts were brought to a ſtooping herein to his worke, it would ſtop many a croſſe, and continue many a bleſſing which God is forced to take from us, that he may worke that griefe in us, which he ſeeth would not otherwiſe be kindly wrought.

4. God giveth ſome larger ſpirits, and ſo their ſorrowes become larger. Some upon quickneſſe of apprehenſion, and the ready paſſages betwixt the braine and the heart, are quickly moved: where the apprehenſion is deeper, and the paſſages ſlower, there ſorow is long in working, and long in removing. The deepeſt waters have the ſtilleſt motion. Iron takes fire more ſlowly than ſtubble, but then it holds it longer.

5. Because God ſees not griefe ſo fit for one diſpoſition as another.

Againe, *God that ſearcheth and knowes our hearts* (better than our ſelves) *knows when and in what meaſure it is fit for to grieve:* Hee ſees it fitter for ſome diſpoſitions, to goe on in a conſtant grief. We muſt give that honour to the wiſdome of the great Phyſitian of ſoules, to know beſt how to mingle and miniſter his potions. And wee muſt not be ſo

so unkinde to take it ill at Gods hands, when hee (out of gentlenesse and forbearance) ministers not to us that churlish Physick hee doth to others, but cheerfully embrace any potion that he thinkes fit to give us. Cap. 22.

Some holy men have desired to see their sinne in the most ugly colours, and God hath heard them in their requests. But yet his hand was so heavy upon them, that they went alwayes mourning to their very graves; and thought it fitter to leave it to Gods wisdome to mingle the potion of sorrow, than to be their own choosers. For a conclusion then of this point, If wee grieve that we cannot grieve, and so far as it is sinne, make it our griefe: then put it amongst the rest of our sinnes, which we beg pardon of, and helpe against, and let it not hinder us from going to Christ, but drive us to him. For, herein lyes the danger of this temptation, that those who complaine in this kinde, thinke it should be presumption to goe to Christ: when as hee especially calleth *the weary and heavy laden sinner* to

Earnest desire of too much sorrow for sin dangerous.

Mr. *Leaver.*

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to come unto him, and therefore such as are sensible that they are not sensible enough of their sin, must know, *though want of feeling be quite opposite to the life of Grace: yet sensiblenesse of the want of feeling, shews some degree of the life of Grace.* The safest way in this case is, from that life and light that God hath wrought in our soules, to see and feele this want of feeling, to cast our selves and this our indisposition, upon the pardoning and healing mercy of God in Christ.

Caution.

Wee speake onely of those that are so farre displeased with themselves for their ill temper, as they doe not favour themselves in it, but are willing to yeeld to Gods way in redressing it, and doe not crosse the Spirit, moving them thus with *David* to check themselves, and to trust in GOD. Otherwise, an unfeeling and careless state of Spirit will breed a secret shame of going to God, for removing of that wee are not hearty in labouring against, so far as our conscience tels us we are enabled.

The most constant state of the soule, in regard of sinne.

The most constant state the soule can be in, in regard of sinne, is, upon judgement

judgement to condemne it upon right grounds, and to reſolve againſt it. Whereupon *Repentance* is called *an after wiſedome and change of the minde.* And this diſpoſition is in Gods children at all times. And for *affections*, love of that which is *good*, and *hatred* of that which is *evill*; theſe likewiſe have a ſetled continuance in the ſoule. But, *griefe* and *ſorow* riſe and fall as freſh occaſions are offered, and are more lively ſtirred up upon ſome lively repreſentation to the ſoule of ſome hurt wee receive by ſinne, and wrong wee doe to God in it. The reaſon hereof is, becauſe till the ſoule be ſeparated from the body, theſe affections have more communion with the body, and therefore they cary more outward expreſſions, than diſlike, or abomination in the minde doth. Wee are to judge of our ſelves more by that which is conſtant, then by that which is ebbing and flowing. Cap. 22.

But, what is the reaſon that the affections doe not alwayes follow the judgement, and the choice or refuſall of the will? Queſt.

Our ſoule being a finite ſubſtance, is caried Anſw. 1.

Cap. 22. carried with ſtrength but one way at one time.

2. 2. Sometime God calls us to joy as well as to grieve: and then no wonder if griefe be ſomewhat to ſeeke.

3. 3. Sometimes when God calleth to griefe, and the *judgement* and *will* goeth along with God, Yet the heart is not alwayes ready, becauſe (it may be) it hath run out ſo far, that it cannot preſently be called in againe.

4. 4. Or, *the ſpirits* (which are the inſtruments of the ſoule) may be ſo waſted, that they cannot hold out to feed a ſtrong griefe: in which caſe, the conſcience muſt reſt in our ſetled judgement and hatred of ill; which is the ſureſt and never-failing Character of a good ſoule.

A never-failing character of a good ſoule.

5. 5. *Oft times God in mercy takes us off from griefe and ſorrow, by refreſhing occaſions:* becauſe ſorrow and griefe are affections very much afflicting both of body and ſoule.

Queſt. *When is godly ſorrow in that degree wherein the ſoule may ſtay it ſelfe from uncomfortable thoughts about its condition?*

When

When we finde ſtrength againſt that ſin which formerly we fell into, and ability to walke in a contrary way: for this anſwers Gods end in griefe, one of which, is a prevention from falling for the time to come. For God hath that affection in him which hee puts into Parents, which is by ſmart to prevent their childrens boldneſſe of offending for the time to come. Cap. 22. *Anſ.* 1. 1. When the ſoule is ſufficiently humbled.

2. *When that which is wanting in griefe, is made up in feare.* Here there is no great cauſe of complaint of the want of griefe, for *this holy affection is the awband of the ſoule*, whereby it is kept from ſtarting from God and his wayes. 2. Feare is the awbād of the ſoul.

3. When after griefe wee finde inward peace; for true griefe being Gods worke in us, *hee* knowes beſt how to meaſure it. Therefore, whatſoever frame God brings my ſoule into, I am to reſt in his goodneſſe, and not except againſt his dealing. That peace and joy, which riſeth from griefe in the uſe of meanes, and makes the ſoule more humble and thankfull to God, and leſſe 3.

Cap. 22. censorious and more pitifull to others: is no illusion, nor false light.

4. *The maine end of griefe and sorow is, to make us value the grace and mercy of God in Christ, above all the contentments which sinne feeds on.* Which where it is found, we may know that griefe for sinne, hath enough possessed the soule before. The sufficiency of things is to be judged by an answerableness to their use and ends: God makes sin bitter, that Christ may be sweet: *that measure of griefe and sorrow is sufficient, which brings us, and holds us to Christ.*

5. *Hatred*, being the strongest, deepest, and steadiest affection of the soule against that which is evill; Griefe for sin is then right, when it springs from hatred, and encreaseth further hatred against it.

How to know that we hate sin rightly.

Now the soul may be known to hate sin, when it seekes the utter abolishing of it, for hatred is an implacable, and irreconcileable affection.

1.

2. True *hatred* is carried against the whole kinde of sin, without respect of any wrong done to us, but only out of a meere

meere *Antipathie*, and contrariety of disposition to it. As the Lambe hateth the whole kinde of Wolves, and man hateth the whole kinde of Serpents. A Toad does us no harme, but yet wee hate it. Cap. 22.

That which is hatefull to us, the nearer it is, the more wee shun and abhorre it, as venemous Serpents, and hurtfull creatures, because the neerenesse of the object affects us more deeply. Therefore, if our griefe spring from true hatred of sinne, it will make no new league with it, but grieve for all sinne, especially for our owne particular sinnes, as being contrary to the worke of Gods grace in us, *then* is *griefe* an affection of the new creature, and every way of the right breed. 3.

But for fuller satisfaction in this case, we must know *there is sometimes griefe for sin in us, when we thinke there is none:* it wants but stirring up by some quickning word; the remembrance of Gods favours and our unkindnesse, or the awaking of our consciences by some crosse, will raise up this affection feelingly 4.

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lingly in us. As in the affection of *love*, many thinke that they have no love to God at all: yet let God be dishonoured in his *name, truth*, or *children*, and their love will soone stir and appeare in just anger.

What wee must doe in want of griefe for sinne.

In want of griefe for sinne, we must remember, 1. *That wee must have this affection from God, before we can bring it unto God.*

1.

2.

And therefore, in the second place, Our chiefe care should be, not to harden our hearts against the motions of the Spirit, stirring us to seasonable griefe, for that may cause a *judiciall hardnesse* from God. God oft inflicteth some spirituall judgement (as a correction upon men) for not yeelding to his Spirit at the first, they feele a hardnesse of heart growing upon them: This made the Church complaine, *Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy feare?* which if *Christians* did well consider, they would more carefully entertaine such impressions of sorrow, as the spirit in the use of the meanes, and observation of Gods dealing towards themselves

Isay 63.

themſelves or others, ſhall worke in them, then they doe. It is a ſaying of *Auſten*, *Let a man grieve for his ſinne, and joy for his griefe.* Though wee can neither *love*, nor *grieve*, nor *joy* of our ſelves, as we ſhould, yet our hearts tell us, wee are often guilty of giving a check to the *Spirit*, ſtirring theſe affections in us, which is a maine cauſe of the many ſharp afflictions wee endure in this life, though Gods love in the main matter of ſalvation be moſt firme unto us. Cap. 22.

Wee muſt not thinke to have all this griefe at firſt, & at once, for oftentimes it is deeper after a ſight and feeling of Gods love then it was before. God is a *free* Agent, and knowes every mans ſeverall mould, and the ſeverall ſervices he is to uſe them in, and oft takes liberty afterwards to humble men more (when he hath inabled them better to beare it) then in their firſt entrance into Religion: Griefe before ſprings commonly from ſelfe-love, and feare of danger. Let no man ſuſpect his eſtate becauſe God ſpares him in the beginning. 3. All a Chriſtians griefe is not at firſt.

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ning. For Christians many times meete with greater tryalls after their conversion than ever they thought on. *When men take little fines, they meane to take the greater rent.* God will have his children first or last to feele what sin is; and how much they are beholding to him for Christ.

Griefe arises not alwayes fr6 our poring on sinne.

This griefe doth not alwaies arise from poring on sinne, but by oft considering of the infinite goodnesse of God in Christ, and thereby reflecting on our owne unworthinesse, not onely in regard of sinne past, but likewise of the sin that hangeth upon us, and issues daily from us. The more holy a man is, the more hee sees the holinesse of Gods nature, with whom he desires to have communion, the more he is grieved that there should be any thing found in him, displeasing to so pure a Majesty.

And as all our griefe comes not at first, so God will not have it come all at once, but to be a streame alwayes running, fed with a spring, yet within the bankes, though sometimes deeper, sometimes shallower. Griefe for sinne is

is like a constant streame; griefe for other things is like a torrent, or swelling waters, which are soon up, soon downe, what it wants in greatnesse, is made up in continuance. Cap. 22.

Againe, *If wee watch not our nature, there will be a spice of Popery* (which is a naturall Religion) *in this great desire of more griefe:* as if we had that, then we had something to satisfie God withall, and so, our mindes will runne too much upon workes. This griefe must not onely be wrought by God revealing our sinne, and his mercy unto us in Christ: But when it is wrought, wee must altogether rest (in a sense of our owne emptinesse) upon the full satisfaction and worthinesse of Christ our Saviour. 4. That there may be a spice of Popery in this our earnest desire of much griefe.

All this that hath beene said, tends not to the abating of our desire to have a tender and bleeding heart for sinne: but that in the pursuit of this desire, we be not cast downe so as to question our estates, if wee feele not that measure of griefe which wee desire and endeavour after: Or, to refuse our portion of joy The scope of this discourse of griefe.

Cap. 23.

which God offers us in Christ. Considering, griefe is no further good, than it makes way for joy: which caused our Saviour to joyne them together:

Mat. 5.

Blessed are the mourners, for they shall bee comforted. Being thus disposed, we may commit our soules to God in peace, notwithstanding Satans troubling of us in the houre of temptation.

CAP. XXIII.

Other spirituall causes of the soules trouble, discovered, and removed: and objections answered.

That the great conflict in us betwixt grace and corruption doth also much cast us downe. *Proximorũ odia sunt acerbissima.*

ANother thing that disquiets and casts downe the soule very much, is, that inward conflict betwixt *grace* and *corruption*: this makes us most worke, and puts us to most disquietment. It is the trouble of troubles to have two inhabitants so neare in one soule, and these to strive one against another, in every action, and at all times in every part and power in us: the one carying us upward, higher and higher

higher ſtill, till wee come to God: the other pulling us lower and lower, further from him. *This cannot but breed a great diſquiet, when a Chriſtian ſhall be put on to that which he would not, and hindered from that which hee would doe, or troubled in the performance of it.* The more light there is to diſcerne, and life of Grace to be ſenſible hereof; and the more love of Chriſt, and deſire from love to be like to him, the more irkeſome will this be: no wonder then that the Apoſtle cryed out, *O wretched man that I am, &c.*

Cap. 23.

Rom. 7.

Rom. 7.

Here is a ſpeciall uſe of Truſt, in the free mercy of God in *juſtification*, (conſidering all is ſtained that comes from us) it is one maine end of Gods leaving us in this conflicting condition, that we may live and die by faith in the perfect righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, whereby we glorifie God more, than if we had perfect righteouſneſſe of our owne. Hereby likewiſe, wee are driven to make uſe of all the promiſes of Grace, and to truſt in GOD for the performance of them, in ſtrengthning his owne

That the ſight and ſenſe of this ſharp conflict, ſhould cauſe us to truſt the more in God.

Cap. 23.

owne party in us, and not only to truſt in God for particular graces, but for his Spirit which is the ſpring of all graces, which wee have through and from Chriſt: who will helpe us in this fight, untill hee hath made us like himſelfe. Wee are under the government of Grace, ſinne is depoſed from the rule it had, and ſhall never recover the right it had againe; *It is left in us for matter of exerciſe, and ground of triumph.*

Object. Of perſeverance to the end, anſwered.

Oh (ſay ſome) I ſhall never hold out, as good give over at firſt as at laſt, I find ſuch ſtrong inclinations to ſinne in mee, and ſuch weakneſſe to reſiſt temptation, that I feare I ſhall but ſhame the cauſe; I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of Sathan, ſtrengthning my corruption.

Anſw.

Why art thou thus troubled? *Truſt in God,* Grace will be above Nature, God above the devill, the Spirit above the fleſh. Be ſtrong in the Lord, the battell is his, and the victory ours before hand. If wee fought in our owne cauſe and ſtrength, and with our weapons, it were ſomething: but as wee fight in the power of God, ſo are wee

kept

kept by that mighty power through faith unto salvation. It lyes upon the faithfulnesse of Christ, to put us into that possession of glory which he hath purchased for us: therefore charge the soule to make use of the promises and rely upon God for perfecting the good worke that he hath begun in thee. Cap. 23. 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Corruptions be strong, but stronger is he that is in us, then that corruption that is in us. When wee are weake in our owne sense, then are we strong in *him*, who perfecteth strength in our weaknesse felt and acknowledged. Our corruptions are Gods enemies as well as ours, and therefore in trusting to *him*, and fighting against them, we may be sure hee will take our part against them.

But I have great impediments, and many discouragements in my Christian course. *Object.*

What if our impediments be *Mountaines*, faith is able *to remove* them; *Who art thou O Mountaine* (saith the Prophet.) What a world of impediments were there betwixt *Egypt* and the land of *Canaan*, betwixt the returne out of *Babylon* *Answ.* Zach 4. 7.

Cap. 23. *Babylon* and *Ierusalem*, yet *faith* removed all, by looking to Gods power and truth in his promise. The looking too much to the *Anakims* and *Gyants*, and too little to Gods omnipotency, shut the Israelites out of *Canaan*, and put God to his oath, that they should *never enter into his rest*, and it will exclude our soules from happinesse at length, if looking too much upon these *Anakims* within us and without us, wee basely despaire and give over the field, considering all our enemies are not onely conquered for us by our *Head*, but shall be conquered in us, so that in strength of assistance we fight against them. God gave the Israelites enemies into their hands, but yet they must fight it out, and what coward will not fight when he is sure of help and victory?

Psal 95.

Object. *But I carry continually about me a corrupt heart, if that were once changed, I could have some comfort.*

Answ. *A new heart* is Gods creature, and hee hath promised to *create it in us*. A creating power cannot only bring somthing out of nothing, but contrary out of

of contrary. Where we are ſure of Gods truth, let us never queſtion that power to which all things are poſſible. If our hearts were as ill, as God is powerfull and good, there were ſome ground of diſcouragement. In what meaſure wee give up our hearts to God, in that meaſure wee are ſure to receive them better. That grace which inlargeth the heart to deſire good, is therefore given, that God may increaſe it, being both a part and a pledge of further grace. There is a promiſe of powring *cleane water* upon us, which *faith* muſt ſue out. Chriſt hath taken upō him to purge his *Spouſe*, and make her fit for himſelfe. Cap. 23. Epheſ. 5.

But I have many wants and defects to be ſupplyed. *Object.*

It pleaſeth him, that in Chriſt *all fulneſſe ſhall dwell*, from whoſe fulneſſe grace ſufficient is diſpenſed to us, anſwerable to the meaſure of our *faith*, whereby we fetch it from the fountain. The more we *truſt*, the more we have. When we looke therefore to our owne want, we ſhould look withall to Chriſts *fulneſſe*, and his neerneſſe to us, and take *Anſw.*

Cap. 23. take advantage from our misery, to rest upon his *al-sufficiency*, whose *fulnesse* is ours, as *himselfe* is. Our fulnesse with our life is hid in Christ, and distilled into us, in such measure as his wisdome thinketh fit, and as sheweth him to be a *free agent*, and yet so as the blame for want of grace lyeth upon us, seeing hee is before hand with us in his offers of grace, and our owne consciences will tell us, that our failings are more from cherishing of some lust, then from unwillingnesse in him to supply us with grace.

Object. *But God is of pure eyes, and cannot endure such services as I performe.*

Answ. Though God be of pure eyes, yet he looks upon us in *him*, who is blameless and without spot, who by vertue of his sweet smelling sacrifice, appeares for us in heaven, and mingles his odors with our services, and in him will God be known to us by the name of a kinde Father, not onely in pardoning our defects, but accepting our endeavours. Wee offer our services to God, not in our owne name, but in the name of our

high

high Priest, who takes them from us, and presents them to his Father, as stirred up by his spirit, and perfumed by his obedience. *Ionas* his prayer was mingled with a great deale of passion and imperfection, yet God could discerne something of his *owne* in it, and pitty and pardon the rest. Cap. 24.

CAP. XXIV.

Of outward troubles disquieting the spirit: and comforts in them.

AS for the *outward evills* that we meet withall in this life, they are either *such*, 1. *As deprive us of the comforts our nature is supported withall*; or else, 2. *they bring such misery upon our nature or condition that hinders our well-being in this world.* 1. 2.

For the first, Trust in God, and take out of his al-sufficiency whatsoever we want. Sure we are by his promise, that wee shall want nothing that is good. What he takes away one way, hee can give another, what hee takes away in one 1. For outward evils. *Amazia.*

Cap. 24.

one hand, he can give in another, what he with-holds one way, he can ſupply in a better. Whatſoever comfort wee have in goods, friends, health, or any other bleſſings, it is all conveyed by *him*; who ſtill remaines though theſe be taken from us. And wee have him bound in many promiſes for all that is needfull for us. We may ſue him upon his owne bond; can we thinke that he who will give us a Kingdome, will faile us in neceſſary proviſion to bring us thither, who himſelfe is our portion?

2. For the miſeries of this life, of our nature and condition.

As for thoſe miſeries which our weake nature is ſubject to, they are all under Chriſt, they come and goe at his command, they are his meſſengers ſent for our good, and called back again when they have done what they came for. Therefore looke not ſo much upon *them*, as *to him* for ſtrength and comfort in them, mitigation *of them*, and grace to profit by them.

To ſtrengthen our faith the more in God, hee calleth himſelfe, a *Buckler* for defence from ill, and an *exceeding great reward* for a ſupply of all good. A *ſunne* for

for the one, and a *ſhield* for the other. Truſt him then with health, weakh, good name, all that thou haſt. It is not in man to take away that from us which God will give us, and keep for us. It is not in mans power to make others conceive what they pleaſe of us. Cap. 24.

Among croſſes, this is that which diſquieteth not the minde leaſt, to bee deceived in matter of *truſt*, when as if wee had not truſted, wee had not beene deceived. The very feare of being diſappointed, made *David* in his haſte thinke *all men were lyars*. But as it is a ſharpe croſſe, ſo nothing will drive us nearer unto God, who never faileth his Pſal. 116.

Friends often prove as the *reed of Egypt*, as a *broken ſtaffe*, and as a *deceitfull Brooke*, that failes the weary paſſenger in Summer time, when there is moſt need of refreſhing; and it is the unhappineſſe of men otherwiſe happy in the world, that during their proſperous condition, they know not who be their friends, for when their condition declines, it plainly appeares, that many were friends of their *eſtates*, and not of Iob. 6. 15.

Cap. 24.

their persons: But when men will know us least, God will know us most, hee knows our soules in *adversity*, and knowes them, so as to support and comfort them, and that from the spring head of comfort, whereby the sweetest comforts are fetcht. What God conveyed before by friends, that he doth now instill immediately from himselfe. The immediate comforts are the strongest comforts. Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples, that they would *leave him alone, yet* (saith hee) *I am not alone, but the Father is with mee.* At S. *Pauls* first appealing, *all forsooke him*, but *the Lord stood by him.* Hee wants no company, that hath Christ for his companion. *I looked for some to take pitty* (saith *David*) *but there was none.* This unfaithfulnesse of man, is a foile to set out Gods truth, who is never neerer than when trouble is neerest. There is not so much as a *shadow* of *change* in him or his love.

Ioh. 16. 32. *Solus non est cui Christus comes est.* Cypr. 2 Tim 17. Ps. 69. 20.

It is just with God, when we lay too much weight of confidence upon any creature, to let us have the greater fall; Man may faile us, and yet bee a good man,

man, but God cannot faile us and bee God, becauſe hee is truth it ſelfe. Shall God be ſo true to us, and ſhall not we be true to him and his truth? Cap. 24.

The like may be ſaid in the departure of our friends. Our life is oft too much in the life of others, which God takes unkindly: How many friends have we in him alone? who rather than wee ſhall want friends, can make our enemies our friends. A true beleever is to Chriſt as his *Mother*, *Brother*, and *Siſter*, becauſe hee carries that affection to them, as if they were *Mother*, *Brother*, and *Siſter* to him indeed. As Chriſt makes us all to him, ſo ſhould we make him all in all to our ſelves. If all comforts in the world were dead, wee have them ſtill in the living Lord. Cõfort in departure of friends. Mat. 12. 50

Sickneſſes are harbingers of death, and in the apprehenſion of many they bee the greateſt troubles, and tame great ſpirits, that nothing elſe could tame, herein wee are more to deale with God than with men, which is one comfort ſickneſſe yeeldeth above other troubles. It is better to be troubled Comfort in ſicknes.

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with the diſtempers of our owne bodies, than with the diſtempers of other mens ſoules; In which wee have not onely to deale with men, but with the devill himſelfe, that ruleth in the humours of men.

Meanes not to be relyed on.

The example of *Aſa* teaches us in this caſe, not to lay too much truſt upon the Phyſitian, but with *Hezekiah firſt* looke up to God, and then uſe the meanes. If God will give us a *quietus eſt*, and take us off from buſineſſe by ſickneſſe, then wee have a time of ſerving God by patient ſubjection to his will. If he meanes to uſe our ſervice any further, hee will reſtore our health and ſtrength to doe that worke hee ſets us about. Health is at his command, and ſickneſſe ſtayes at his rebuke. In the meane, the time of ſickneſſe is a time of purging from that defilement wee gathered in our health, till wee come purer out; which ſhould move us the rather willingly to abide Gods time. Bleſſed is that ſickneſſe that proves the health of the ſoule. Wee are beſt, for the moſt part, when wee are weakeſt.

Optimi ſumus dum infirmi ſumus

Then

Then it appeares what good proficients we have beene in time of health. Cap. 24.

Carnall men are oft led along by falſe hopes ſuggeſted by others, and cheriſhed by themſelves, that they ſhall live ſtill, and doe well, till death comes, and cuts off their vaine confidence, and their life both at once, before ever they are acquainted what it is to truſt in God aright, in the uſe of meanes. Wee ſhould labour to learne of S. *Paul* in deſperate caſes, *to receive the ſentence of death*, and not to truſt *in our ſelves*, but in God *that raiſeth the dead*. He that raiſeth our dead bodies out of the grave, can raiſe our diſeaſed bodies out of the bed of ſickneſſe, if he hath a pleaſure to ſerve himſelfe by us. 2 Cor. 1. 9

In all kinde of troubles, it is not the ingredients that God puts into the Cup ſo much afflicts us, as the ingredients of our diſtempered paſſions mingled with them. The ſting and coare of them all is *ſinne*: when that is not onely pardoned, but in ſome meaſure healed, and the proud fleſh eaten out, then a healthy ſoule will beare any Sin the greateſt trouble.

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thing. After repentance, that trouble that before was a correction, becomes now a triall and exercise of grace. *Strike Lord* (saith *Luther*) *I beare any thing willingly, because my sinnes are forgiven.* Wee should not be cast downe so much about outward troubles, as about sinne, that both procures them, and invenomes them. Wee see by experience, when conscience is once set at liberty, how chearefully men will goe under any burthen: therefore labour to keep out sinne, and then let come what will come.

Avoid not trouble by sinne.

It is the foolish wisdome of the world to prevent trouble by sin, which is the way indeed to pull the greatest trouble upon us. For sinne dividing betwixt God and us, moveth him to leave the soule to intangle it selfe in its owne wayes. When the conscience is cleare, then there is nothing between God and us to hinder our trust. Outward troubles rather drive us neerer unto God, and stand with his love. But sin defileth the soule, and sets it further from God. *It is well doing* that inables us

1 Pet. 4. 3. 21.

us to commit our ſoules cheerefully unto him. Whatſoever our outward condition be, if *our hearts condemne us not*, we may have *boldneſſe with God*. In any trouble our care ſhould be, not to avoid the trouble: but ſinfull miſcariage *in* and *about* the trouble, and ſo *truſt God*. It is a heavy condition to be under the burthen of trouble, and under the burthen of a guilty conſcience both at once. When men will *walke in the light of their owne fire*, and *the ſparkes which they have kindled themſelves*, it is juſt with God, that *they ſhould lie downe in ſorow*.

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Iohn 1.

Iſay 50 *ult.*

Whatſoever injuries we ſuffer from thoſe that are ill affected to us, let us commit our cauſe to the *God of vengeance*, and not meddle with his prerogative. He will revenge our cauſe better than wee can, and more perhaps than wee deſire. The wronged ſide, is the ſafer ſide, * If in ſtead of meditating revenge, we can ſo overcome our ſelves, as to pray for our enemies, and deſerve well of them, wee ſhall both ſweeten our owne ſpirits, and prevent a ſharpe

* *Melior eſt triſtitia, iniquapatientis, quam letitia, iniqua facientis.* Aug.

Cap. 24.

temptation which wee are prone unto, and have an undoubted argument, that we are ſonnes of that Father that doth good to his *enemies*, and members of that Saviour that prayed for his *perſecutors*. And withall by *heaping coales* upon our enemies, ſhall melt them either to converſion, or to confuſion.

Luk. 23. 34

Cõfort in the houre of death.

But the greateſt tryall of *truſt*, is in our laſt encounter with death, wherein we ſhall find not onely a deprivation of all *comforts* in this life, but a confluence of all *ill* at once, but wee muſt know, God will be the God of *his* unto death, and not onely unto death, but in death. We may truſt God the Father with our bodies and ſoules which he hath created; and God the Sonne, with the bodies and ſoules which hee hath redeemed; and the holy Spirit, with thoſe bodies and ſoules that hee hath ſanctified. Wee are not diſquieted when wee put off our cloathes and goe to bed, becauſe we truſt Gods ordinary providence to raiſe us up againe. And why ſhould we be diſquieted when we put off our bodies, and ſleep our laſt ſleep, conſidering

dering we are more ſure to riſe out of our graves, than out of our beds. Nay we are raiſed up already in Chriſt our head: *who is the reſurrection and the life*, in whom wee may triumph over *death*, that triumpheth over the greateſt Monarchs, as a diſarmed and conquered enemie. Death is the death of it ſelfe, and not of us. If wee would have faith ready to die by, wee muſt exerciſe it well in living by it, and then it will no more faile us, than the good things we lay hold on by it, untill it hath brought us into heaven, where that office of it is laid aſide: here is the prerogative of a true Chriſtian above an hypocrite and a worldling, when as their truſt, and the thing they truſt in, failes them, then a true beleevers truſt ſtands him in greateſt ſtead.

Cap. 24.

Ioh. 11. 25

In regard of our *ſtate after death*, a Chriſtian need not be diſquieted, for the *Angels* are ready to doe their office in carrying his ſoule to *Paradiſe*, thoſe Manſions *prepared for him*. His Saviour will bee his Judge, and the Head will not condemne the members: *then* hee is

Comfort from the ſtate after death.

Iohn 14. 2

Cap. 24. is to receive the fruit and end of his Faith, the reward of his Hope; which is so great and so sure, that our trusting in *God* for that, strengthneth the heart to trust him for all other things in our passage; so that the refreshing of our faith in these great things, refreshes its dependance upon God for all things here below. And how strong helpes have wee to uphold our Faith, in those great things which wee are not able to conceive of, till wee come to possesse them? Is not our husband there? and hath hee not taken possession for us? doth hee not keep our place for us? Is not our flesh there in him? and his Spirit below with us? have wee not some first fruits and earnest of it before hand? Is not Christ now a fitting and preparing of us daily, for what he hath prepared and keepes for us? Whither tends all we meete with in this world, that comes betwixt us and heaven, as desertions, inward conflicts, outward troubles, and death at last, but to fit us for a better condition hereafter, and by Faith therein, to stirre up a strong desire

desire after it? *Comfort one another with these things*, saith the *Apostle*; these be the things will comfort the soule. Cap. 25. 1 Thes. 4.

Cap. XXV.

Of the defects of gifts, disquieting the soule. As also the afflictions of the Church.

AMong other things, there is nothing more disquiets a Christian, that is called to the fellowship of Christ and his Church here, and to glory hereafter, than that he sees himselfe unfurnished with those gifts that are fit for the calling of a Saint, As likewise for that particular standing and place wherein God hath set him in this world, by being a member of a body politick.

Comfort in regard of our generall calling.

For our *Christian calling*, wee must know that Christianity is a matter rather of grace than of gifts, of obedience than of parts. *Gifts* may come from a more common worke of the Spirit, they are common to castawayes, and

Cap. 25. and are more for others than for our ſelves. *Grace* comes from a peculiar favour of God, and eſpecially for our owne good. In the ſame duty, where there is required both gifts and grace, (as in *prayer*) one may performe it with evidence of greater grace, than another of greater parts. *Moſes* (a man not of the beſt ſpeech) was choſen before *Aaron*, to ſpeak to God, and to ſtrive with him by Prayer, whilſt *Iſrael* fought with *Amalek* with the ſword. It is a buſineſſe more of the heart than of the tongue, more of groanes than of words, which groanes and ſighes, the Spirit will alwayes ſtirre up even in the worſt condition. Yet for parts there is no member, but it is fitted with ſome abilities, to doe ſervice in the body, and by faith may grow up to a greater meaſure. For God calls none to that high condition, but whom in ſome meaſure hee fits to be an uſefull member, and endues with a publique ſpirit.

Exod. 7. 11

But that is the meaſure which Chriſt thinkes fit; who will make up that in the

the body, which is wanting in any particular member. God will encreaſe the meaſure of our gifts, as occaſion ſhall be offered to draw them forth: for there is not the greateſt, but may have uſe both of the parts, and graces of the meaneſt in the Church. And here the ſoule may by a ſpirit of faith goe to God in this manner: Lord, the eſtate of Chriſtianity unto which thy love in Chriſt hath called, and advanced mee, is an high condition; and there is need of a great meaſure of grace, to uphold the credit and comfort of it. Whom thou calleſt unto it, thou doſt in ſome meaſure furniſh, to walke worthy of it. Let this be an evidence to my ſoule of the truth of thy call, that I am enabled by the Spirit for thoſe duties that are required; in confidence of which aſſiſtance, I will ſet upon the work: *Thou haſt promiſed to give wiſdome to them that aske it, and to upbraid none with their unworthineſſe. Nay, thou haſt promiſed the ſpirit of all grace to thoſe that beg it*; it is that which I need, and it is no more than thou haſt promiſed. Cap. 25. Jam 1. 5.

Onely

Cap. 25. *Caution.*

Onely it must bee remembred, that we doe not walke above our parts and graces, the issue whereof will be discouragement in our selves, and disgrace from others.

Directions for a comfortable use of our particular calling. Gal. 5. 13.

The like may be said for our *particular* calling, wherein we are to expresse the graces of our Christian calling, and *serve one another in love*, as members of the *State* as well as of the *Church*, therefore every one must have 1. a calling, 2. a lawfull, 3. a usefull calling, 4. a calling fitted for his parts, that he may be even for his businesse, 5. a lawfull entrance, and calling thereunto, 6. and a lawfull demeanour in the same. Though the Orbe and Sphere we walk in be little, yet wee must keepe within the bounds of it, because for our cariage in that, wee must give a strict account, and there is no calling so meane, but a man shall finde enough to give a good account for. Our care must be to know our worke, and then to doe it, and so to doe it, as if it were unto God, with conscience of moderate diligence; for over-doing, and over-working any thing,

Parts negotii.

thing, comes either from oſtentation, or diſtruſt in God: And negligence is ſo farre from getting any bleſſing, that it brings us under a *curſe* for *doing Gods worke negligently*. For wee muſt thinke our callings to be ſervices of God who hath appointed us our ſtanding therein. Cap. 25. Ier. 48. 10.

That which belongs to us in our calling, is care of diſcharging our duty, that which God takes upon him, is aſſiſtance and good ſucceſſe in it. Let us doe our worke, and leave God to doe his owne. Diligence and truſt in him is onely ours, the reſt of the burthen is his. In a Family the Fathers and the Maſters care is the greateſt, the childs care is onely to obey, and the ſervants to doe his worke, care of proviſion and protection doth not trouble them. Moſt of our diſquietneſſe in our calling, is that wee trouble our ſelves about Gods worke. Truſt God and be doing, and let him alone with the reſt. Hee ſtands upon his credit ſo much, that it ſhall appeare we have not truſted him in vaine, even when wee ſee no appearance

Cap. 25. rance of doing any good. *Peter* fished all night and catched nothing, yet upon Christs word hee casts in his net againe, and caught so many fish as *brake*
Luke 5. 6. *his net*. Covetousnesse (when men will be richer than God would have them) troubles all, *it troubles the house*, the whole family, and the house within us our precious soule, which should be a quiet house for Gods *Spirit to dwell in*, whose seat is a quiet spirit. If men would follow Christs method, and
Mat. 6. 33. *seeke first the Kingdome of heaven*, all other things would be cast upon them. If thoughts of insufficiency in our places discourage us, remember what God saith to *Moses*, when he pretended dis-
Exod. 4. 11 ability to speake, *Who hath made mans mouth, have not I the Lord?* All our sufficiency for every calling is from God.

Object. But you will say, *Though by Gods blessing my particular condition be comfortable, yet the state of Gods people abroad, and the miseries of the times disquiet me.*

Answ. Wee complaine of the times, but let us take heed wee be not a part of the misery

misery of the times: that they bee not the worse for us. Indeed hee is a dead member, that takes not to heart the ill of the times, yet here is place for that complaint, *Help Lord.* In these tempests doe as the Disciples did, Cry to Christ to rebuke the tempests and stormes. This is the day of *Iacobs* trouble, let it also be the day of *Iacobs* trust; let the body doe as the head did in the like case, and in time it shall be with the body as it is with the head. Cap. 25. Hab. 3. Psal. 12.

Comfort in regard of the afflictions of the Church.

In this case it is good to lay before God all the promises made to his Church, with the examples of his presence in it, and deliverance of the same in former times. God is never neerer his Church than when trouble is neere: when in earth they conclude an utter overthrow, God is in heaven concluding a glorious deliverance: usually after the lowest ebbe, followes the highest spring tide. Christ stands upon *Mount Zion.* There is a Counsell in heaven, that will dash the mould of all contrary Counsels on earth; and which is more, God will worke the

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raising of the Church, by that very meanes by which his enemies seeke to ruine it. *Let us stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord.* God gave too deare a price for his Church, to suffer it long in the hands of mercilesse enemies.

As for the seeming flourishing of the *enemies* of Gods Church, it is but for a time, and that a short time, and a measured time, *The wicked plot against the just*, they are *plotters* and *plowers of mischiefe*; they are skilfull and industrious in it, but they reape their owne ruine. *Their day is a comming*, and *their pit is in digging*: take heed therefore of *fretting*, because of the man *that bringeth wicked devices to passe*; for *the armes of the wicked shall be broken.* Wee should help our faith by observing Gods executing of judgement in this kinde. It cannot but vexe the enemies of the Church, to see at length a disappointing of their projects, but then to see the mould of all their devices turned upon their owne heads, will more torment them.

Psal. 37. 12
Iob 4. 8.
Psal. 37. 12
Psal. 94. 13
Psal. 37. 7.
Psal. 37. 17
Reade Psalmes 10. 37. 94. 129. &c.

In

In this caſe, it will much comfort to goe into the Sanctuary, for there wee ſhall be able to ſay, *Yet God is good to Iſrael.* God hath an Arke for his, there is no condition ſo ill, but there is Balme in *Gilead*, comfort in *Iſrael*. *The depths of miſery are never beyond the depths of mercy.* God oft for this very end, ſtrips his Church of all helps below, that it may onely rely upon him: and that it may appeare that the Church is ruled by an higher power than it is oppoſed by. And *then is the time when we may expect great deliverances of the Church, when there is a great faith in the great God.* Cap. 25. Pſal. 73.

From all that hath been ſaid, we ſee, that the onely way to quiet the ſoule is, to lay a charge upon it to truſt God, and that unquietneſſe and impatiency, are ſymtomes and diſcoveries of an unbeleeving heart.

Cap. 26.

CAP. XXVI.

Of divine reasons in a beleever. Of his minding to praise God, more than to be delivered.

TO goe on. [*I shall yet praise him.*] In these words *David* expresseth the reasons and grounds of his trust, namely from the interest he had in God by experience and speciall covenant: wherein in generall we may observe, that those who truly trust in God, labour to back their faith with sound *arguments*; faith is an understanding grace, it knowes *whom* it trusts, and *for what*, and upon what *grounds* it trusts: *Reason* of it selfe cannot finde what wee should beleeve, yet when God hath discovered the same, *faith* tells us there is great reason to beleeve it; *faith* useth reason (though not as a ground, yet) as a sanctified instrument to finde out Gods grounds, that it may rely upon them. Hee beleeves best, that knowes best why hee should beleeve; Confidence, and love, and other affections of the

Back *faith* with strong *reason.*

the soule, though they have no reason grafted in them, yet thus farre they are reasonable, as that they are in a wise man raised up, guided, and laid downe with reason, or else men were neither to be blamed nor praised for ordering their affections aright; whereas not only civill vertue, but *grace* it selfe is especially conversant in ruling the affections by sanctified reason. Cap. 26.

The soule guides the *will* and *affections*, otherwise then it doth the outward members of the body. It swayes the affections of *confidence*, *love*, *joy*, *&c.* as a Prince doth his wiser subjects, and as Counsellors doe a well ordered State by ministring *reasons* to them; but the soule governes the outward members by *command*, as a master doth a slave, * his will is enough. The hand and foot move upon command, without regarding any reason; but we will not *trust* and rejoyce in God without *reason*, or a shew of reason at the least.

* *Stat pro ratione voluntas.*

Sinne it selfe never wanted a reason, such as it is, but we call it *unreasonable*, because it hath no good reason for it; Sin hath its reason.

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for *reaſon* being a beame of God, cannot ſtrengthen any worke of darkneſſe. God having made man an underſtanding creature, guides him by a way ſutable to ſuch a condition, and that is the reaſon why God in mercy yeelds ſo far to us in his word, as to give us ſo many reaſons of our affiance in him. What is encouragement and comfort, but a demonſtration to us of greater reaſons to raiſe us up, than there are to caſt us downe.

Davids reaſons (here) are drawne partly from ſome *promiſe* of deliverance, and partly from Gods *nature* and *dealing* with him, *whom*, as hee had formerly found an *healing*, and a *ſaving God*, ſo he expects to finde him ſtill; and partly from the *covenant of grace*, hee is *my God*.

The chiefe of his reaſons are fetched from God, what hee is in *himſelfe*, and what hee is and will be *to his children*, and what to him in particular; though godly men have *reaſons* for their *truſt*, yet thoſe reaſons be *divine* and ſpirituall as *faith* it ſelfe is; for as naturally as beames

beames come from the Sunne, and branches from the *roote*, even so by divine discourse one truth issueth from another. And as the beames and the Sunne, as the roote and branches are all of one nature, so the grounds of comfortable truths, and *reasons* taken from those grounds, are both of the same divinity and authority, though in time of *temptation* discourse is oft so troubled, that it cannot see how one truth riseth from another; this is one priviledge of *heaven*, that our knowledge there shall not be so much *discoursive*, proving one thing by another, as *definitive*, seeing things in their *grounds* with a more present view: the soule being then raised and enlarged to a present conceiving of things, and there being no flesh and bloud in us, to raise objections that must be satisfied with *reasoning*. Cap. 26.

A godly mans reasons are *divine*.

Sometimes in a clearer state of the soule, *faith* hath not so much use of reasons, but upon neere and sweet communion with God, and by reason of some likenesse betweene the soule that hath a divine nature stamped upon it,

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and God, it presently without any long discourse, runneth to God as it were by a supernaturall instinct, as by a naturall instinct a childe runneth to his Father in any distresse. Yea, and from that common light of nature, which discovereth there is a God, even naturall men in extremities will runne to God, and God as the Author of nature will sometimes heare them, as he doth the yong *Ravens* that cry unto him; but comfortably, and with assurance onely those have a familiar recourse unto him, that have a sanctified sutable disposition unto God, as being well acquainted with him.

Sometimes againe *faith* is put to it to use reasons to strengthen it selfe, and therefore the soule studieth arguments to help it selfe by, either from inward store laid up in the soule, or else it hearkeneth, and yeelds to reasons suggested by others; and there is no gracious heart, but hath a frame sutable and agreeable to any holy and comfortable truth that shall be brought and enforced upon it; there is something in his spirit

ſpirit that anſwers what ever comes from the Spirit of God: though perhaps it never heard of it before, yet it preſently claimes kindred of it, as comming from the ſame bleſſed Spring, the *holy Spirit*; and therefore a gracious heart ſooner takes comfort than another, as being prepared to cloſe with it. Cap. 26.

The *Reaſons* here brought by *David*, are not ſo much arguments to convince his *judgement*, as motives and inducements to encline his *will* to truſt in God: for *truſting* being a holy relying upon God, carryeth eſpecially the *will* to him; now the *will* is led with the goodneſſe of things, as the *underſtanding* is led with truth; the heart muſt be ſweetned with conſideration of love and mercy in him whom we truſt, as well as convinced of his ability to doe us good, the cords that draw the heart to truſt, are the *cords of love*, and the cords of love are eſpecially the love of him to us whom we love; and therefore the moſt prevailing reaſons that carie the whole heart, are ſuch as are drawne from the ſweetneſſe of God,

Cap. 26. God, whereby the heart is opened and enlarged to expect all good, and nothing but good from him.

But we must remember that neither *reasons* from the truth and power of God, nor *inducements* or allurements from the goodnesse of God, will further prevaile with the soule, then it hath a fresh light and relish brought into it by the Spirit of God, to discerne of those reasons, and answer the contrary.

[*I will praise him.*] *David* here minds praising of God more then his owne *delivery*, because he knew his owne delivery was intended on Gods part, that he might be *glorified*. It is an argument of an excellent spirit, when all selfe-respects are drowned in the glory of God; and there is nothing lost therein; for our best beeing is in God. A Christian begins with loving God for himselfe; but he ends in loving himselfe in and for God: and so his end, and Gods end, and the end of all things else, concenter and agree in one. Wee may ayme at our owne good, so wee bring our hearts

hearts to referre it to the *chiefe good*, as a leſſe circle may well be contained in a greater, ſo that the *lines* drawne from both *circles*, meet in one middle point. It is an excellent ground of ſincerity, to deſire the favour of God, not ſo much out of ſelfe-aymes, as that God may have the more free and full *praiſe* from us, conſidering the ſoule is never more fit for that bleſſed duty, then when it is in a cheerefull plight. Cap. 26.

It rejoyced *David* more, that hee ſhould have a large heart to ſerve God, than that he ſhould have enlargement of condition. Holy diſpoſitions thinke not ſo much of the time to come, that it will be ſweet to them, as that it will further Gods praiſe. True grace raiſeth the ſoule above ſelfe-reſpects, and reſteth not till it comes to the chiefe end, wherein its happineſſe conſiſts.

God is glorified in making us happy, and wee (enjoying happineſſe) muſt glorifie God. Although God condeſcend ſo low unto us, as not onely to allow us, but to enjoyne us to looke to our

Cap. 26. our owne freedome from misery, and enjoyment of happinesse, yet a soule throughly seasoned with *grace*, mounteth higher, and is caried with pure respects to advance Gods glory; yea sometimes so farre, as to forget its owne happinesse, it respects it selfe for God, rather than God for it selfe. A heavenly soule is never satisfied, untill it be as neere God as is attaineable. And the neerer a creature comes to God, the more it is emptied of it selfe, and all selfe-aymes. Our happinesse is more in *him*, than in our selves. *Wee seeke our selves most, when we deny our selves most.* And the more wee labour to advance God, the more we advance our owne condition in him.

[*I will praise.*] *David* thinkes of his owne *duty* in praising God, more than of *Gods worke* in delivering him: Let us thinke of what is our duty, and God will thinke of what shall be for our comfort; we shall feele God answering what we looke for from him, in doing what hee expects from us. Can wee have so meane thoughts of him, as that

that we should intend his glory, and he not much more intend our good? Cap. 26.

This should be a strong plea unto us in our prayers, to prevaile with God, when wee ingage our selves upon the revelation of his mercy to us, to yeeld him all the praises. Lord as the benefit and comfort shall be mine, so the praises shall be thine.

It is little lesse than blasphemy, to praise God for that which by unlawfull shifts wee have procured; for besides the *hypocrisie* of it (in seeming to sacrifice to him, when we sacrifice indeed to our owne wits and carnall helps) wee make him a Patron of those wayes which he most abhors; and it is *Idolatry* in the highest degree, to transforme God so in our thoughts, as to thinke hee is pleased with that which comes from his greatest enemy. And there is a grosse mistake to take Gods curse for a blessing; to thrive in an ill way, is a spirituall judgement, extreamly hardening the heart. We ought not to praise God in doing evill.

It is an argument of *Davids* sincerity here, that he meant not to take any indirect

Cap. 26. indirect course for delivering himselfe, because hee intended to *praise God*, which as no guilty conscience can offer, (being afraid to look God in the face,) so God would abhorre such a sacrifice, were it offered to him. S. *Paul* was stirred up to *praise God*, but withall he was
2 Tim. 4. 18 assured *God would preserve him from every evill worke.*

Sometimes indeed where there is no malicious intention, God pardons some breakings out of flesh and bloud, endeavouring to helpe our selves in danger, so farre as not to take advantage of them to desert us in trouble,
1 Sam. 27. 10. as in *David* who escaped from *Achis* by *counterfeiting*; and this yeelds a double ground of thankfulnesse, partly for Gods over-looking our miscariage, and partly for the deliverance it selfe. Yet this indulgence of God, will make the soule more ashamed afterward, for these sinfull shifts, therefore it must be no president to us. There can neither be grace nor wisdome in setting upon a course, wherein wee can neither pray to God for successe in, nor blesse God when

when he gives it. In this case God most blesseth, where hee most crosseth, and most curseth where the deluded heart thinkes he blesseth most. Cap. 27.

Cap. XXVII.

In our worst condition wee have cause to praise God. Still ample cause in these dayes.

I *Shall yet praise him.*] Or, *yet I will praise God*; that is, however it goeth with mee, yet as I have cause, so I have a spirit to praise God; when we are at the lowest, yet it is a mercy that we are *not consumed*; we are never so ill, but it might be worse with us; whatsoever is lesse than hell is undeserved. It is a matter of praise, that *yet* we have time and opportunity to get into a blessed condition. *The Lord hath afflicted me sore, but hee hath not delivered mee to death*, saith *David*. Psal. 18. 18

In the worst times there is a presence of God with his children.

1. In moderating the measure of the 1.

Cap. 27. the croſſe, that it be not above their ſtrength.

2. 2. In moderating the time of it, *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt long upon the lot of the righteous.* God limits both meaſure and time.

Pſal. 125. 3

3. 3. Hee is preſent in mixing ſome comfort, and ſo allaying the bitterneſſe of a croſſe.

4. 4. Yea, and he ſupports the ſoule by inward ſtrength; ſo as though it faint, yet it ſhall not utterly faile.

5. 5. God is preſent in ſanctifying a croſſe for good, and at length when he hath perfected his owne worke in his, he is preſent for a finall deliverance of them. A ſound hearted Chriſtian hath alwayes a God to goe to, a promiſe to goe to, former experience to goe to, beſides ſome preſent experience of Gods goodneſſe which he enjoyes: for the preſent he is a child of God, a member of Chriſt, an heire of heaven; hee dwels in the love of God in the croſſe, as well as out of it, he may be caſt out of his happy condition in the world, but never out of Gods favour.

If

If Gods children have cause to praise God in their worst condition, what difference is there betwixt their best estate and their worst? Cap. 27. Object.

Howsoever Gods children have continuall occasion to praise God, yet there be some more especiall seasons of praising God than others, there bee dayes of *Gods owne making*, of purpose to rejoyce in, wherein wee may say, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce therein.* Answ. Psal 118.24 And this I thinke is chiefly intended here. *David* comforts himselfe with this, that however it was now with him, yet God would deale so graciously with him hereafter, that hee should have cause to blesse his name.

Though in evill times we have cause to praise God, yet so wee are, and such are our spirits (for the most part) that affliction straitens our hearts. Therefore the Apostle thought it the fittest duty in affliction to pray, *Is any afflicted let him pray*, saith *Iames*; *Is any joyfull, let him sing Psalmes*, shewing that the day of rejoycing is the fittest day of praising God. Every worke of a Christian Iam. 5. 13.

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is beautifull in its owne time, the graces of Christianity have their severall offices at severall seasons; in trouble, *prayer* is in its season, in the evill day

Psal. 51. 15. *call upon mee*, saith God: In better times *praises* should appeare and shew themselves. When God manifests his goodnesse to *his*, hee gives them grace with it, to manifest their thankfulnesse to him. Praising of God is then most comely (though never out of season) when God seemes to call for it, by reanewing the sense of his mercies in some fresh favour towards us. If a bird will sing in Winter, much more in the Spring. If the heart be prepared in the Winter time of adversity to praise God, how ready will it bee when it is warmed with the glorious Sunshine of his favour?

Praise is most comly in prosperity.

Our life is nothing, but as it were a *webbe* woven with interminglings of wants and favours, *crosses* and *blessings*, standings and failings, *combate* and *victory*, therefore there should be a perpetuall intercourse of *praying* and *praising* in our hearts. There is alwryes a ground

ground of communion with God in one of these kindes, till wee come to that condition wherein all wants shall be supplyed, where indeed is only matter of *praise*. Yet praising God in this life, hath this prerogative, that here wee praise him *in the middest of his enemies*. In heaven all will be in consort with us. God esteemes it an *honour* in the middest of devils, and wicked men (whose life is nothing but a dishonour of him) to have those that will make his *name* (as it is in it selfe, so) *great* in the *world*.

Cap. 27. Christians have continuall ground of cõmunion with God.

David comforts himselfe in this, that he *should praise God*; which shewes he had inured himselfe well before to this holy exercise, in which hee found such comfort, that he could not but *joy* in the fore-thoughts of that time, wherein he should have fresh occasion of his former acquaintance with God. Thoughts of this nature enter not into a heart that is strange to God.

Thoughts of praise should be precious to us.

It is a speciall Art in time of misery, to thinke of matter of *joy*, if not for the present, yet for the time *to come*; for

Cap. 27.

joy diſpoſeth to *praiſe*, and praiſe again ſtirres up *joy*; theſe mutually breed one another, even as the ſeed brings forth the tree, and the tree brings forth the ſeed. It is wiſdome therefore to ſet *faith* on worke, to take as much comfort as wee can from *future* promiſes, that wee may have comfort and ſtrength for the *preſent*, before we have the full poſſeſſion of them. It is the nature of *faith* to antedate bleſſings; by making them that are to be performed *hereafter*, as preſent *now*, becauſe wee have them in the *promiſe*. If God had not allowed us to take many things in truſt for the time *to come*, both for his glory, and our good, hee would never have left ſuch rich promiſes to us. For *faith* doth not only give glory to God for *the preſent* (in a preſent beleeving of his truth, and relying upon him) but as it lookes forward, it ſees an *everlaſting* ground of praiſing God, and is ſtirred up to praiſe him *now*, for that *future* matter of *praiſe*, which it is ſure to have hereafter. The very hopes of future good, made *David* praiſe God for

for the present. If the happy condition wee looke for were present, wee would embrace it with present praises. Now *faith is the evidence of things not seene*, and gives a being to *that*, which is not; whereupon a true beleeving soule cannot but bee a praising soule. For this end God reveales before hand what we shall have, that before hand we should praise him, as if we possessed it. For that is a great honour to his truth, when wee esteeme of what hee speakes, as done, and what he promiseth, as already performed. Had wee not a perpetuall confidence in the perpetuity of his love to us, how is it possible we should praise him? Cap. 27. Heb. 11. 1.

But we want those grounds for the time to come which David *had, he had particular promises which we want.* *Object.*

Though wee want *Vrim* and *Thummim*, and the Prophets to foretell us what the times to come shall be, yet we have the Canon of Scripture enlarged, we live under a more glorious manifestation of Christ, and under a more plentifull shedding of the Spirit, where- *Answ.* 1.

Cap. 27. by that want is abundantly ſupplyed; we have generall promiſes for the time
Deut. 31 6. to come, that *God will never faile nor forſake us*; that *he will be* with us in *fire*
Heb. 12. 11 *and in water*, that *he will give an iſſue to the temptation*, and that *the iſſue of all things ſhall be for our good*, that *wee ſhall reape the quiet fruit of righteouſneſſe*, and
Pſal. 84. 11 *no good thing will he withhold from them that tend a godly life*, &c. If wee had a ſpirit of faith to apply theſe generalls, we ſhould ſee much of Gods goodneſſe in particular.

2. Beſides generall promiſes, wee have ſome particular ones for the time to come; of the confuſion of *Antichriſt*, of the converſion of the *Iewes*, and fulneſſe of the *Gentiles*, &c. which though we perhaps ſhall never live to ſee, yet wee are members of that body, which hereafter ſhall ſee the ſame, which ſhould ſtir up our hearts to praiſe God, as if we did enjoy the preſent fulfilling of them our ſelves, for *faith* can preſent them to the ſoule, as if they were now preſent.

3. Some that have a more neere communion

munion with God, may have a particular faith of ſome particular deliverances, whereupon they may ground particular prayer. " *Luther* praying for a " ſick friend, who was very comforta- " ble, and uſefull to him, had a particu- " lar anſwer for his recovery, whereup- " on hee was ſo confident, that he ſent " word to his friend, that hee ſhould " certainly recover. *Latimer* prayed " with great zeale for three things, " 1. That Queen *Elizabeth* might come " to the Crowne. 2. That hee might " ſeale the truth with his heart bloud. " 3. And that the Goſpell might be re- " ſtored *once againe*, *once againe*, which " hee expreſſed with great vehemency " of ſpirit. All which three GOD " heard him in. But the priviledges of a few muſt not be made a generall rule for all. Priviledges goe not out of the perſons, but reſt there. Yet if men would maintaine a neerer communion with God, there is no doubt but hee would reveale himſelfe in more familiar manner to them, in many particulars then uſually he doth. Thoſe particular

Cap. 27.

Frud. Myco.

1.

2.

3.

Cap. 27. promiſes in the 91. Pſalme, and other places, are made good to ſuch as have a particular faith, and to all others (with thoſe limitations annexed to promiſes of that nature) ſo far forth as God ſeeth it will induce to their good and his owne glory, and ſo farre forth as they depend upon him in the uſe of meanes; And is not this ſufficient to ſtay a gracious heart?

But not to inſiſt upon particular promiſes and revelations, (the performance whereof wee enjoy *here* in this preſent life) we have rich and precious promiſes of finall and full deliverance from all evill, and perfect enjoying of all good in that life which is to come; yet not *ſo to come*, but that we have the earneſt and firſt fruits of it here; All is not kept for heaven; Wee may ſay Pſal. 31. 19 with *David*, *Oh how great is thy goodneſſe, which thou haſt laid up for them that feare thee*, and (not onely ſo, but) how great is that goodneſſe which thou haſt wrought in them that *truſt* in thee, even *before the ſons of men*; God treaſures not up all his goodneſſe for the time to come,

come, but layes much of it out daily *before* such as have eyes to behold it. Cap. 27.

Now Gods maine end in revealing such glorious promises of the life to come, is, that they might be a ground of comfort to us, and of praise to him even in this life; And indeed what can be grievous in this world to him that hath heaven in his eye? What made our blessed Saviour *endure the crosse*, and *despise shame*, but the joy *of glory to come set before him?* Heb. 12. 2.

The *duty* that *David* brought his heart to before hee had a full enjoyment of what hee looked for, was patient *waiting*, it being Gods use to put a long date oftentimes to the performance of his promises; *David* after he had the promise of a Kingdome, was put off a long time ere he was invested to it; *Abraham* was an old man before he enjoyed his sonne of the *Promise*; *Ioseph* stayed a long time before he was exalted; Our blessed Saviour himselfe was thirty foure yeares old before hee was exalted up into glory. Waiting upon God a necessary duty.

God deferres, but his deferring is no empty

Cap. 27. empty ſpace, wherein no good is done, but there is in that ſpace a fitting for promiſes. Whileſt the ſeed lyeth hid in the earth, time is not loſt, for Winter fits for Spring, yea the harder the Winter, the more hopefull the Spring; yet were it a meere empty ſpace, wee ſhould hold out, becauſe of the great things to come; but being onely a preparing time, we ſhould paſſe it with the leſſe diſcouragement. Let this ſupport us in all the thwartings of our deſire; it is a folly to thinke, that wee ſhould have Phyſick and health both at once; wee muſt endure the working of Gods Phyſick; when the ſick humour is caried away and purged, then wee ſhall enjoy deſired health. God promiſeth forgiveneſſe of ſinne, but thou findeſt the burthen of it daily on thee. Cheere up thy ſelfe, when the morning is darkeſt, then comes day; after a weary weeke comes a Sabbath, and after a fight victory will appeare. Gods time is beſt, therefore reſolve upon waiting his leiſure. For the better demeaning of our ſelves herein, we muſt know we muſt

must so *waite*, that wee provoke not in the meane time his patience on whom we depend, by putting forth our hand to any evill, which indeed is a crossing of our hopes. Therefore waiting upon God, is alwayes joyned with *doing good*. There is an influence in the thing hoped for, in the spirit of him that truly hopes, stirring him up to a suitable conformity, by purging himself of whatsoever will not stand with the holinesse of that condition. *Waiting* implyes all graces, as *Patience*, *Perseverance*, *Long-suffering* in holding out, notwithstanding the tediousnesse of time deferred; *Courage*, and breaking through all difficulties that stand betweene. For what is *waiting* indeed, but a continuing in a gracious inoffensive course, till the accomplishment of our desires? Cap. 27.

What it is to *wait* upon God.

Whence wee may discerne a maine difference betwixt a Christian, and a carnall man, who is short-spirited, and all for the present; hee will have his good here, whereas a Saint of God continues still waiting, though all things seeme contrary to what hee expects.

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Heb. 11. 25

pects. The presence of things to come is such to *faith*, as it makes it *despise the pleasure of sinne for a season*. What evidence of goodnesse is it, for a man to be good onely upon the apprehension of something that contents him? Here is the glory of *faith*, that it can upon Gods bare promise, crosse it selfe in things pleasing to nature, and raise up the soule to a disposition, some wayes answerable to that blessed estate, which (though yet it enjoyes not, yet) it is undoubtedly perswaded of, and looks for. What can incourage us more to *waite*, than this, that the good wee wait for, is greater than we are able to conceive, yea greater than we can desire or hope for?

This was no presumptuous resolution of *Davids* owne strength, but it issued from his present truth of heart, (so farre as hee knew the same;) together with an humble dependance upon God, both for deliverance, and a heart to praise him for it; because Gods benefits are usually entire, and are sweetned with such a sense of his love, as causeth

causeth a *thankfull heart*, which (to a true Christian) is a greater blessing then the deliverance it selfe, as making the soule better. *David* doth acknowledge with humble admiration, that a heart enlarged comes from God, *Who am I* (saith he) *and who are my people?* Cap. 28.

Hee mentioneth here *praising God*, in stead of *deliverance*, because a heart enlarged to praise God, is indeed the greatest part of the *deliverance*; for by it the soule is delivered out of its owne straits and discontent.

CAP. XXVIII.

Divers qualities of the praise due to God. With helps therein. And notes of Gods hearing our prayers.

THough this be Gods *due* and our *duty*, and in it selfe a delightfull thing, yet it is not so easie a matter to *praise God*, as many imagine: Musick is sweet, but the setting of the strings in tune is unpleasing; our soules will not be long in tune, and it is harsh to us to go about the

No easie matter to praise God aright.

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the ſetting them in order; like curious Clocks, a little thing will hinder the motion; eſpecially *paſſion*, which diſturbs not onely the frame of grace in us, but the very frame of *nature*, putting man out of the power and poſſeſſion of himſelfe; and therefore *David* here when hee had thoughts of *praiſing God*, was faine to take up the quarrell betwixt him and his ſoule firſt; *Praiſing* ſets all the parts and graces of the ſoule aworke; and therefore the ſoule had need gather it ſelfe and its ſtrength together to this *duty*.

Self-denyal requiſite in praiſing God.

It requires eſpecially *ſelfe-denyall*, from a conſcience of our owne wants, weakneſſes, and unworthineſſe; it requires a giving up of our ſelves, and all ours to be at Gods diſpoſe; the very *ground* and the *fruit* which it yeelds are both Gods; and they never gave themſelves truly up to God, that are not ready to give all they have to him whenſoever hee calls for it; *thankfulneſſe* is a *ſacrifice*, and in ſacrifices there muſt be *killing* before *offering*, otherwiſe the ſacrifice will be as the offering up of ſome

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some uncleane creature; *thanksgiving* is an *Incense*, and there must be *fire* to burne that Incense; *thanksgiving* requires not onely *affections*, but the *heat* of affections; there must be some assurance of the benefit wee praise God for; and it is no easie matter to maintain assurance of our interest in the best things.

What a Christian should doe in want of assurance.

Yet in this case if wee feele not sense of assurance, it is good we should praise God for what we have; we cannot deny but God offers himselfe in mercy to us, and that he intends our good thereby, for so wee ought to construe his mercifull dealing towards us, and not have him in jealousie without ground; if we bring our hearts to be willing to praise God, for that wee cannot but acknowledge comes from him, he will be ready in his time to shew himselfe more clearely to us; we taste of his goodnesse many wayes, and it is accompanied with much patience, and these in their natures leade us not onely to *repentance*, but likewise to *thankfull* acknowledgement; and wee ought to follow that which

Rom. 2. 4.

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which God leades us unto, though hee hath not yet acquainted us with his secrets.

Resolutiõ necessary in Christianity.

It is good in this case to help the soule with a firm *resolution*, and to back resolution with a *vow*, not onely in generall that we will *praise*, but particularly of something within our owne power, (provided it prove no snare to us.) For by this meanes the heart is perfectly gained, and the thing is as good as done in regard of Gods acceptance, and our comfort; because strong resolutions discover *sincerity* without any hypocriticall reservation and hollownesse. Alwayes so much sincerity as a man hath, so much will his inward peace be. *Resolution* as a strong streame beares downe all before it; little good is done in Religion without *this*, and with it all is as good as done.

So soone as wee set upon this worke, wee shall feele our spirits to rise higher and higher as the waters in the *Sanctuary*, as the soule growes more and more heated; see how *David* riseth by degrees, *Be glad in the Lord*, and then, *rejoyce*

Psal. 32. 11.

joyce ye *righteous*, and then, *shout for joy all yee that are upright in heart*, the spirit of God will delight to carry us along in this duty, untill it leaves our spirits in *heaven*, praising God with the *Saints* and glorious *Angels* there; *to him that hath* and useth *it shall be given*; hee that knoweth God aright, will honour him by trusting of him; hee that honours him by trusting him, will honour him by *praying*; and he that honours him by prayer, shall honour him by *praises*; hee that honours him by praises *here*, shall perfect his praises in *heaven*; and this will quit the labour of setting and keeping the soule in tune; this trading with God is the richest trade in the world; when we returne *praises* to him, he returnes new favours to us, and so an everlasting ever-increasing intercourse betwixt God and the soule is maintained; *David* here resolved to *praise God*, because he had assurance of such a deliverance as would yeeld him a ground of praising him. Cap. 28. Mat. 25. 29

Praising of God may well be called *Incense*, because as it is sweet in *it selfe*, *Praise*, a sweet Incense.

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and ſweet to *God*, ſo it ſweetens all that comes from us. *Love* and *Ioy* are ſweet in themſelves, though thoſe whom we love and joy in, ſhould not know of our affection, nor returne the like; but we cannot love and joy in God, but hee will delight in us; when we neglect the praiſing of God, we loſe both the comforts of Gods love, and our owne too; It is a ſpirituall judgement to want or loſe the ſight or ſenſe of Gods favours, for it is a ſign of want of ſpirituall life, or at leaſt livelineſſe; it ſhewes we are not yet in the ſtate of thoſe whom God hath choſen, to ſet forth the riches of his glory upon.

When we conſider that if we anſwer not kindneſſe, and favour ſhewed unto us by men, we are eſteemed unworthy of reſpect (as having ſinned againſt the bond of humane ſociety and love) wee cannot but much more take ſhame to our ſelves, when wee conſider the diſproportion of our carriage, and unkind behaviour towards God; when in ſtead of being *temples* of his praiſe, wee become *graves* of his benefits; what a vanity

nity is this in our nature, to ſtand upon exactneſſe of juſtice, in anſwering petty curteſies of men and yet to paſſe by the ſubſtantiall favours of God, without ſcarce taking notice of them? the beſt breeding is to acknowledge greateſt reſpects where they are moſt due, and to think, that if unkindneſſe and rudeneſſe be a ſinne in *civility*, it is much more in *Religion*; the greateſt danger of unthankfulneſſe, is in the greateſt matter of all; if wee arrogate any ſpirituall ſtrength to our ſelves in ſpirituall actions, wee commit either *ſacrilege* in robbing God of his *due*; or *mockerie*, by praiſing him for that which we hold to be of our ſelves; if injuſtice be to be condemned in man, much more in denying God his due, *Religion* being the firſt due. It takes much from thankfulneſſe, when we have common conceits of peculiar favours, *praiſe* is not comely in the mouth of *fooles*, God loves no *blind ſacrifice*. Mal. 1. 8.

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Vnthankfulnes *moſt hainous* towards *God*.

We ſhould therefore have wiſdome and judgement, not onely to know upon what *grounds* to be thankfull, but in

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what *order*, by discerning what be the best and first favours whence the rest proceed, and which adde a worthinesse to all the rest; it is good to see blessings, as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing, to see the love and favour of God in it, which is more to be valued than the blessing it selfe; as it much commends any thing that comes from us, when we put a respect of thankfulnesse, and love to God upon it; and if we observe, we shall find the unkindnesse of others to us, is but a correction of our unkindnesse to God.

Gods love in every mercy chiefly to be looked at.

In *praising God*, it is not good to *delay*, but take advantage of the freshnesse of the blessing; what we adde to delay, we take from *thankfulnesse*; and withall, lose the prime and first fruits of our affections; It is a wise redeeming of time, to observe the best *seasons* of thankfulnesse; a cheerefull heart will best close with a cheerefull duty; and therefore it is not good to waste so fit a temper in frivolous things, but after some contentment given to nature, let God have the fruit of his owne planting;

Not to delay our praises.

ing; otherwise it is even no better than the refreshing of him that standeth by a good fire, and cryeth *Ah, ah, I am warme.* Cap. 28. Isa. 44. 16.

David doth not say, *I will thanke God,* but *I shall praise him*; (though hee intends *that*) Thankes is then best when it tends to *praising*, and there ends; for thankes alone shewes respect to our *owne* good onely, praises to *Gods glory*; and in particular to the glory of such *excellencies* whence the benefit comes; and from thence the soule is enlarged to thinke highly of all Gods *excellencies.*

Hanna upon particular thankes for hearing her about a *childe*, takes occasion to set out Gods other *excellencies*, and riseth higher and higher, from *one* to *many*, from the present time, to that which was to come, from particular favours to her selfe, shee stirres up others to praise God for his mercy to them; So *David*, *Deliver me, O God, and my tongue shall sing of thy praises*; Hee propounds this as an ingagement to the Lord to helpe him, because it should 1 Sam. 2. 1. Psal. 51.

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tend to the inlargement of his glory; he was resolved to improve Gods favour this way.

Our *thanks* should bee large.

The Spirit of God workes like *new wine*, enlarging the spirit from one degree of praising God to another; and because it foresees the eternity of Gods love, (as farre as it can) it endeavours an eternity of Gods praise; a gracious heart upon taste of favour shewed to it selfe, is presently warmed to spread the praise of God to others, and the more it sees the fruit of trusting *God*, and his *truth* in performing promise, the more it still honours that *trusting*, as knowing that it lyes upon Gods honour, *to honour* those that *honour him*; blessing will procure blessing; the soule hath never such freedome from sinne, as when it is in a thankfull frame; for *thankfulnesse* issues from a heart truly humbled, and emptied of it selfe, truly loving and rejoycing in God; and upon any sinne the spirit is grieved and straitned and the lips sealed up in such a heart; for the conscience upon any sinne, lookes upon it not only as *disobedience* against

1 Sam. 30.

Gods

Gods will and authority, but as *unthankfulneſſe* to his goodneſſe, and this melteth a godly heart moſt of all; Whē *Nathan* told *David* God had done this, and *this for him*, and was ready to doe more, he could not hold in the *confeſſion* of his *ſinne*, but relented and gave in preſently. Cap. 28. 2 Sam. 12 8

We ought not onely to give *thanks*, but to be *thankfull*, to meditate and ſtudy the praiſes of God. Our whole life ſhould be nothing elſe but a continuall bleſſing of his holy Name, endeavouring to bring in all we have, and to lay it out for God and his people, to ſee where he hath any receivers; our goodneſſe is *nothing to God*, wee need bring no water to the *fountaine*, nor light to the *Sun*. Thankfulneſſe is full of invention, it deviſeth liberall things, though it be our duty to be good Stewards of our talents, yet *thankfulneſſe* addes a luſtre, and a more gracious *acceptance*, as having more of that which God calls for. We ſhould ſtudy *Gods* praiſes. Pſal. 16. 2.

Our praiſing God ſhould not bee as ſparkes out of a *flint*, but as water out of Praiſe ſhould be free.

Cap. 28. Mic. 7. 8.

of a *spring*, naturall, ready, free, as Gods love to us is; *mercy* pleases him, so should *praises* please us; It is our happinesse when the best part in us, is exercised about the best and highest worke; it was a good speech of him that said, If God had made me a *Nightingale*, I would have sung as a *Nightingale*, but now God hath made mee a man, I will sing forth the *praises of God*, which is the worke of a Saint onely; *All*

Ps. 145. 10.

thy workes blesse thee, and thy Saints praise thee; All things are either blessings in their nature, or so blessed, as they are made blessiings to us by the over-ruling comming of *him*, who maketh all things serviceable to *his*, even the worst things in this sense are made spirituall to Gods people against their owne nature; how great is that goodnesse which makes even the worst things good?

The least mercy to be prized.

Little favours come from no small love, but even from the same love that God intends the greatest things to us, and are pledges of it; the godly are more thankfull for the least favours, than wordly men for the greatest; the affection

affection of the giver inhaunces the gift. Cap. 28.

O then let us labour to improve, both what we have, and what wee are to his glory: It discovers that we *love* God, (not onely with all our *understanding*, *heart*, and *affections*, but) when with all our *might* and *power*, so farre as we have advantage by any *part*, *relation*, or *calling* whatsoever we endeavour to doe him service, wee cannot have a greater honour in the world, than to be honoured of God, to be abundant in this kinde.

Our time here is short, and we shall all ere long be called to a reckoning, therefore let us study *reall* praises. Gods blessing of us is in *deed*, and so should ours bee of him. Thankes in *words* is good, but in *deeds* is better; *leaves* are good, but *fruit* is better; and of fruit, that which *costs* us most. True *praise* requires our whole man, the *judgement* to esteeme, the *memory* to treasure up, the *will* to resolve, the affections to delight, the *tongue* to speake of, and the life to expresse the rich favours of God: what

Our praise should be reall.

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what can we thinke of? what can wee call to minde? what can we reſolve upon? what can wee ſpeake? what can we expreſſe in our whole courſe, better than the *praiſes* of him, *of whom, and through whom, and to whom* we and *all things are?*

Rō. 11. 36.

Our whole life ſhould ſpeake nothing but thankfulneſſe; every condition and place we are in, ſhould be a witneſſe of our thankfulneſſe; this will make the times and places wee live in, the better for us; when wee our ſelves are monuments of Gods mercy, it is fit wee ſhould be patternes of his praiſes, and leave monuments to others; Wee ſhould thinke life is given us, to doe ſomething better than life in; we live not to live; our life is not the end of it ſelfe, but the praiſe of the giver; God hath joyned his glory and our happineſſe together; it is fit that wee ſhould referre all that is good to his glory, that hath joyned his glory to our beſt good, in being glorified in our ſalvation.

David concludes, that he *ſhould certainly*

tainly praiſe God, becauſe he had *prayed* unto him. Prayers be the ſeeds of praiſes, I have ſowne, therefore I will reap; what we receive as a fruit of our prayers, is more ſweet than what wee have by a generall providence. Cap. 28.

But how doe wee know that God heares our prayers? *Object.*

1. If we regard them our ſelves, and expect an iſſue; prayer is a ſure adventure, we may well look for a returne. *Anſw.* 1.

2. It is a ſigne God hath heard our prayers, when hee ſtirres up thankfulneſſe aforehand upon aſſurance; thankfulneſſe cannot be without either the grace of God, by which wee are thankfull, or ſome taſte of the things we are thankfull for. God often accepts the prayer, when hee doth not grant the thing, and will give us thereby occaſion of thankſgiving for his wiſe care, in changing one bleſſing for another fitter for us. God regards my prayers, when by prayer my heart is wrought to that frame which hee requires, that is, an humble ſubjection to him, from an acknowledgement of my wants, and his fulneſſe. 2.

Cap. 28. fulneſſe. There is nothing ſtirred up in our hearts by the Spirit, no, not ſo much as a gracious deſire, but God will anſwer it, if we have a ſpirit to waite.

3. 3. We may know God hath accepted our prayer, when he makes the way eaſie & plain after prayer by a gracious providence; when the courſe of things begin to change, and wee meete with comforts in ſtead of former croſſes, and find our hearts quieted and encouraged againſt what we moſt feared.

4. 4. Likewiſe earneſtneſſe in prayer is a ſigne God heares our prayers, as fire kindled from heaven ſheweth God accepts the ſacrifice; the ground of prevailing by our prayer, is, that they are put up in a gracious name, and for perſons in favour, and dictated by Gods owne Spirit; they work in the ſtrength of the bleſſed Trinity, not their owne, giving God the glory of all his excellencies.

Pſal. 50. 15. It is Gods direction *to call upon him in trouble*, & it is his promiſe *to deliver*; and then both his *direction* and *promiſe* that we ſhall *glorifie him*; When troubles

bles ſtirre up *prayer*, Gods anſwer to them will ſtirre up *praiſes*. *David* when hee ſaith, *I ſhall praiſe God*, preſuppoſes God would deliver him, that he might have ground of praiſing his Name. And hee knew God would deliver him, becauſe as from faith he had prayed for deliverance, ſo hee knew it was the order of Gods dealing, to revive after drooping, and refreſh after fainting. God knowes otherwiſe that our ſpirits would faile before him. Cap. 28.

A thankfull diſpoſition, is a ſpeciall help in an afflicted condition, for *thankfulneſſe* ſprings from *love*, and love *rejoyceth in ſuffering*. Thankfulneſſe raiſes the ſoule higher than it ſelfe, it is trading with God, whereby as *we* by him, ſo *he* gaines by us. Therefore the Saints uſed this as a motive to God, that hee would grant their deſires, becauſe *the living praiſe him*, and not *the dead*. If God expect praiſe from us, ſure he will put us into a condition of praiſe. Acts 15.21 Iſay 38.19.

Unthankfulneſſe is a ſinne deteſtable both to God and men, and the leſſe puniſhment it receives from humane lawes,

Cap. 28. lawes, the more it is punished *inwardly* by secret shame, and *outwardly* by publique hatred, if once it prove notorious. When Gods arrests come forth for denying him his tribute, he chiefly eyes an unthankfull heart, and hates all sin the worse, as there is more unthankfulnesse in it: the neglect of kindnesse is taken most unkindly. Why should wee load God with injuries, that loadeth us with his blessings? who would requite good with evill? Such mens mercies will prove at last so many indictments against them.

Vse. I beseech you therefore labour to be men of praises. If in any duty wee may expect assistance, wee may in this, that altogether concernes Gods glory: the more we praise God, the more wee shall praise him. When God by grace enlarges the *will*, he intends to give the *deede*. Gods children wherein their wils are conformable to Gods will, are sure to have them fulfilled. In a fruitfull ground, a man will sow his best seed. God intends his owne glory in every

Psal. 50. 23 mercy, and he that *praises him, glorifies him.*

him. When our wills therefore carry us to that which God wills above all, wee may well expect he will ſatisfie our deſires. The living God is a living fountaine never drawne dry, he hath never done ſo much for us, but hee can and will doe more. If there be no end of our praiſes, there ſhall be no end of his goodneſſe: no way of thriving like to this. By this meanes we are ſure never to be very miſerable; how can hee be dejected, that by a ſweet communion with God ſets himſelfe in heaven? nay maketh his heart a kinde of heaven, *A Temple, a holy of holies,* wherein *Incenſe* is offered unto God. It is the ſweeteſt branch of our Prieſtly office, to offer up theſe daily ſacrifices; It is not onely the beginning, but a further entrance of our heaven upon earth, and ſhall bee one day our whole imployment for ever. Cap. 28. 2 Cor. 6.16

Praiſe is a juſt and due tribute for all Gods bleſſings; for what elſe eſpecially doe the beſt favours of God call for at our hands? How doe all creatures praiſe God, but by *our* mouths? It is a Praiſe is a juſt and due debt,

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a debt alwayes owing, and alwayes paying; and the more wee pay, the more wee ſhall owe; upon the due diſcharge of this debt, the ſoule will finde much peace. A thankfull heart to God for his bleſſings, is the greateſt bleſſing of all. Were it not for a few gracious ſoules, what honour ſhould God have of the reſt of the unthankfull world? which ſhould ſtirre us up the more to be trumpets of Gods praiſes in the midſt of his enemies, becauſe this (in ſome ſort) hath a prerogative above our praiſing God in heaven; for there God hath no enemies to diſhonour him.

Praiſing of God, A duty without exception.

This is a *duty* that none can except againſt, becauſe it is eſpecially a worke of the *heart*. All cannot ſhew their thankfulneſſe in *giving*, or *doing* great matters, but all may expreſſe the willingneſſe of their hearts. *All within us* may *praiſe his holy Name*, though wee have little or nothing *without us*; and that within us is the thing God chiefly requires. Our heart is the *Altar* on which wee offer this *Incenſe*; God lookes

Pſal. 103.

things for them: Kings shall lay their Crowns at *Christs feet*, and *bring all their* glory to the *Church*. Cap. 29. Rev. 21. 24.

And for every Christian, this may be a comfort, that though their light for a time may be eclipsed, yet it shall break forth. *David* at this time was accounted an enemy of the State, and had a world of false imputations laid upon him, which hee was very sensible of; yet (wee see here) hee knew at length God would bee *the salvation of his countenance.*

But some (as Gideon) *may object, if God intend to be so gracious, why is it thus with us?* *Object.*

The answer is, *Salvation* is Gods *owne* work, *humbling* and casting downe is his *strange worke*, whereby he comes to his owne worke. For, when hee intends to save, hee will seeme to destroy first: and when hee will justifie, he will condemne first: whom he will revive, hee will kill first. Grace and goodnesse countenanced by God, have a native inbred Majesty in them, which maketh the face to shine, and borroweth not *Answ.*

Cap. 29. its luſtre from without, which God at length will have to appeare in its owne likeneſſe, howſoever malice may caſt a vaile thereon, and diſguiſe it for a time. And though wickedneſſe (as it is baſe borne, and a child of darkneſſe) may ſhelter it ſelfe under authority a while, yet it ſhall hide it ſelfe and runne into corners. The comfort of comforts is, that at that great day, (the day of all dayes) that day *of the Revelation of the righteous Iudgement of God*; the righteous ſhall then ſhine as the *Sunne* in the *firmament*, then Chriſt will come to be glorious in his Saints, and will be *the ſalvation of the countenance* of all his. Then all the works of darkneſſe ſhall be driven out of countenance, and adjudged to the place from whence they came. In the meane time let us (with *David*) ſupport our ſelves with the hopes of theſe times.

Dan. 12.

CAP.

Cap. 30.

CAP. XXX.

Of God, our God, and of particular application.

[MY *God.*] These words imply a speciall interest that the holy man had in God, (*as his God*) being the ground of all which was said before; both of the duty of *trusting*, and of *praising*, and of the *salvation* that hee expected from God. He *is my God*, therefore be not disquieted but trust him. He *is my God*, therefore hee will give mee matter to praise him, and will be *the salvation of my countenance*; God hath some speciall ones in the world, to whom he doth as it were passe over himselfe, and whose God he is by vertue of a more speciall covenant; whence we have these excellent expressions, *I will be your God, and you shall be my people: I will be your Father, and you shall be my sonnes and daughters.* Since the *fall* wee having lost our communion with God the chiefe good, our happinesse stands in recovering againe

That *Davids* interest in *God* was a speciall foundation of his trusting in God.

Jer 31. 33. 2 Cor 6 18

Cap. 30.

fellowſhip with him. For this end wee were created, and for this redeemed, and for effecting of this, the Word and Sacraments are ſanctified to us, yea, and for this end God himſelfe (out of the bowels of his compaſſion) vouchſafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, founded upon Jeſus Chriſt, and his ſatisfaction to divine juſtice; ſo that by Faith wee become one with him, and receive him, as offered of his Father to *be all in all to us.*

Why *Chriſt* hath his name *Immanuel.*

Hence it is, that CHRIST hath his name *Immanuell, God with us.* Not onely becauſe hee is *God*, and *man* too, (both natures meeting in one perſon) but becauſe being God in our nature, he hath undertooke this office to bring God and us together. The maine end of Chriſts comming and ſuffering, was to reconcile, and to gather together in one; and (as *Peter* expreſſeth it) *to bring man againe to God. Immanuel* is the bond of this happy agreement, and appeares for ever in heaven to make it good. As the comfort hereof is great, ſo the foundation of it is ſure and everlaſting. God will

1 Pet. 3. 18

will be our God, *so long* as he is Christs God; and *because* hee is Christs God. Thus the Father of the faithfull, and all other holy men before Christ, apprehended God to be their God in the *Messias* to come. Christ was the ground of their interest. Hee was *yesterday* to them as well as *to day* to us. Hence it is that God is called the *portion* of his people, and they his *jewels:* hee their onely *rock* and *strong Tower*, and they his peculiar ones.

Cap. 30. Ioh. 20. 10.

Heb. 13. Psa. 73. 26. Mal 3 25. Psal 71.

Well may we wonder that the great God should stoope so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinfull dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of Angels, a torment of devils, and glory of our nature and persons; and will be matter of admiration, and praising God unto us for all eternity.

Vse.

As God offereth himselfe to be ours in Christ (else durst we lay no claime to him) so there must be in us an appropriating grace of *faith*, to lay hold of

That there must be on our part an appropriating of *God* as he tenders himselfe to be our God.

Cap. 30.

this offer. *David* ſaith here, *My God.* But by what ſpirit? by a ſpirit of *faith*, which looking to Gods offer, maketh it his owne whatſoever it layes hold of. God offereth himſelfe in covenant, and Faith catcheth hold thereon preſently. With a gracious offer of God, there goeth a gracious touch of his Spirit to the ſoule, giving it ſight and ſtrength, whereby (being ayded by the ſame Spirit) it layeth hold on God ſhewing himſelfe in love. God ſaith to the ſoule, *I am thy ſalvation*, and the ſoule ſaith againe, *Thou art my God. Faith is nothing elſe but a ſpirituall eccho, returning that voice back againe, which God firſt ſpeakes to the ſoule.* For what acquaintance could the ſoule claime with ſo glorious a Majeſty, if he ſhould not firſt condeſcend ſo low, as to ſpeake peace, and whiſper ſecretly to the ſoule, that he is *our* loving God and Father, and *wee* his peculiar ones in Chriſt, that our ſinnes are all pardoned, his juſtice fully ſatisfied, and our perſons freely accepted in his deare Sonne.

But to come more particularly to the

the words [*My God.*] The words are pregnant; in the wombe of them, all that is graciously & comfortably good is contained; they are the spring head of all particular blessings. All particular *Relations* and *Titles* that it pleaseth God to take upon him, have their strength from hence, that God is *our God.* More cannot be said, and lesse will not serve the turne. Whatsoever else wee have, if we have not God, it will prove but an *empty Cisterne* at last. He is our proper element, every thing desires to liue in its owne element, fishes in the Sea, Birds in the ayre; in this they are best preserved. Cap. 30.

There is a greater strength in this [*My God*] than in any other Title, it is more than if he had said My *King*, or My *Lord*; these are words of soveraignty and wisdome; but this implies not onely infinite power, soveraignty, and wisdome, but likewise infinite *bounty* and provident care; so that when wee are said to be *Gods people*, the meaning is, that wee are not onely such over whom God hath a power and com-

Cap. 30. mand, but such as towards whom hee shewes a *loving* and *peculiar respect*.

1. 2. In the words is implyed, 1. A propriety and interest in God. 2. An improvement of the same for the quieting of the soule.

Particular faith necessary, and why.

David (here) layes a *particular* claim, by a particular *faith* unto God. The reason is, 1. The vertue of *faith* is as to lay hold, so to appropriate to it selfe, and make *its owne* whatever it layes hold on, and it doth no more in this, then God gives it leave by his gracious promises to doe.

1.

2. 2 As God offers, so *faith* receives, but God offers himselfe in *particular* to the beleeving soule by his Spirit, therefore our faith must bee particular. That which the Sacraments seale, is a *peculiar* interest in Christ. This is that which hath alwayes upheld the Saints of God, and that which is ever joyned with the life of Christ in us. *The life that I live* (saith Paul) *is by the faith of the Sonne of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.* The spirit of faith is a spirit of application.

Gal. 2. 20.

This

This is implyed in all the *Articles* of our faith; we beleeve God to be *our* Father, and Christ to be *borne for us*, that he *dyed* for us, and *rose againe* for our good, and now sits at the right hand of God, making requests *for us* in particular. Cap. 30.

3 This is that which distinguisheth the faith of a true Christian from all hypocrites and cast-awayes whatsoever. Were it not for this word of possession [*Mine*] the devill might say the *Creed* to as good purpose as we; hee beleeves there is a God, and a Christ, but that which torments him is this, he can say [*My*] to never an Article of Faith. 3.

4 A generall apprehension of Gods goodnesse and mercy may stand with desperation. Take away *My* from *God*, and take away God himselfe in regard of comfort; what comfort was it for *Adam*, when hee was shut out of Paradise, to looke upon it after hee had lost it? The more excellencies are in God, the more our griefe if we have not our part in them: the very life blood of the 4. *Tolle meum tolle Deum.*

Cap. 30. the Gospell, lyes in a speciall application of particular mercy to our selves. All relations that God and Christ have taken upon them, imply a necessity of application; What if God be a *rock* of salvation if we doe not rest upon him? What if he be a *foundation*, and we doe not build on him? What if hee offers himselfe as a husband, if we will not accept of him, what availes it us? How can we rejoyce in the salvation of our soules, unlesse we can in particular say, *I rejoyce in God my Saviour.*

5. 5. Without particular application, we can neither entertaine the love of God, nor return love againe, by which meanes wee lose all the comfort God intends us in his word, which of purpose was written for our solace and refreshment; Take away *particular faith*, and we let out all the spirits of cheerefull and thankfull obedience.

This possessive particle [*My*] hath place in all the golden chaine of our salvation. The first spring of all Gods claime to us as his is in his *election* of us; we were by grace *his* before we were;

those

thoſe that are his from that *eternall love*, he *gives to Chriſt*; this is hid in the breaſt of God, till he *calls us* out of the reſt of the world into Cõmunion with Chriſt. In anſwering of which call (by *faith*) wee become one with Chriſt, and ſo one with him. Afterwards in *juſtification* wee feele God experimentally to be reconciled unto us, whence ariſes *joy* and inward *peace*. And then upon further *ſanctification* God delights in us as *his*, bearing his *owne* image, and wee from a likeneſſe to God, delight in him as *ours* in his Chriſt, and ſo this mutuall intereſt betwixt God and us, continues untill at laſt God becomes *all in all* unto us. Cap. 30.

But how can a man that is not yet in the ſtate of grace ſay with any comfort, [My God?] *Object.*

Whileſt a man *regards iniquity in his heart* without any remorſe or diſlike of the ſame, if hee ſaith *My God*, his *heart* will give his *tongue* the lye, however in an outward profeſſion, and opinion of others, hee may beare himſelfe as if God were *his*, upon falſe grounds. For there *Anſw.*

Cap. 30. there can be no more in a Concluſion, then it hath from the Principle and Premiſes out of which it is drawne. The *principle* (here) is, that God is the God of all that *truſt in him.* Now if wee can make it good, that wee truely truſt in God, wee may ſafely conclude of comfort from him; for the more certaine clearing of which, try your ſelves by the ſignes of truſt delivered.

It is no eaſie matter to ſay in truth of heart [*My God*] the fleſh will ſtill labour for ſupremacie, God ſhould be *all in all* unto us, but this will not be till theſe bodies of fleſh (together with the body of ſinne be laid aſide. Hee that ſayes, God is [*My God,*] and doth not yeeld up himſelfe unto God, raiſeth a building without a foundation, layeth a *claim* without a *title*, and claimeth a *title* without an *evidence*, reckoning upon a bargain, without conſent of the party with whom he would contract.

But if a man ſhall out of the ſight and ſenſe of ſin, thirſt after mercy in Chriſt, and call upon God for pardon, *then* God
Pſal. 65. 2. *who* (*is a* God *hearing prayer*, and) delighteth

lighteth to be knowne by the name of *mercifull*, will bee ready to close and meet with the desire of such a soule, so farre as to give it leave to relie upon him for mercy, (and that without presumption) untill hee further discovers himselfe graciously unto it; upon sense of which grace, the Soule may be encouraged to lay a farther claime unto God, having further acquaintance with him. Hence are those exhortations so oft in the *Prophets*, to *turne unto the Lord our God*, because upon our *first* resolution to turne unto God, wee shall finde him alwayes ready to answer those desires, that hee stirres up by his owne Spirit in us. Cap. 30. Zach. 1.3.

Wee are not therefore to stay our turning unto God, till wee feele him saying to our hearts, *I am thy God*, but when hee prevents us by his grace, inabling us to desire grace, let us follow the work begun, in the strength of what grace we have, & then God will further manifest himselfe in mercy to us.

Yet God before wee can make any thing towards him, letteth into our hearts

Cap. 30. hearts some few beams of mercy, thereby drawing us unto him, and reaching us out a hint to lay hold upon.

And as sinne causeth a distance betwixt God and us, so the guilt of sinne in the cõscience, causes further strangenesse, insomuch that wee dare not look up to heaven, till God open a little crevise to let in a little light of comfort (at least) into our soules, whereby we are by little and little drawne neerer to him. But this light at the first is so little, that in regard of the greater sense of *sinne*, and a larger desire of *grace*, the soule reckons the same as no light at all, in comparison of what it desires and seekes after. Yet the comfort is, that this dawning light will at length cleere up to a perfect day.

Thus we see how this claime of God to be *our God*, is still in *growth* untill full assurance, and that there is a great distance betwixt the first *act* of faith in cleaving to God, offering himselfe in Christ to be *ours*, and betweene the *last fruit* of faith, the cleere and comfortable feeling, that God is *our God* indeed.

We

Wee first by *faith* apply our selves to God, and then apply God to us, to be *ours*; The first is the conflicting *exercise* of faith, the last is the *triumph* of faith; therefore *faith* properly is not assurance. And to comfort us the more, the *promises* are specially made to the *act* of faith, fuller assurance is the *reward* of faith. Cap. 30.

If God hath not chosen mee in Christ to be his, what ground have I to trust in him? I may cast away my selfe upon a vaine confidence. *Object.*

We have no ground (at first) to trouble our selves about Gods *election*. Secret things belong to God; Gods revealed will is, *That all that beleeve in Christ shall not perish.* It is my dutie therefore knowing *this*, to beleeve, by doing whereof, I put that question [*whether God be mine or no?*] out of all question: for all that *beleeve* in Christ, are *Christs*, and all that are Christs *are Gods*. It is not my duty to looke to Gods secret counsell, but to his open *offer*, *invitation* and *command*, and thereupon to adventure my soule. And this adventure *Answ.* Ioh. 3. 15.

Cap. 30.

Quis pollicetur seréti proventum, naviganti portum, militanti victoriam? Ideo Navigantes vitam ventis credunt, &c. Salvian. *Ideo terris frumenta credimus ut cum usuris credita recipiamus.*

ture of *Faith* will bring at length a rich returne unto us. In warre men will adventure their lives, becauſe they thinke ſome will eſcape and why not they? In traffique beyond the Seas many adventure great eſtates, becauſe ſome grow rich by a good returne, though many miſcarry. The Huſbandman adventures his ſeed, though ſometime the yeare proves ſo bad, that hee never ſees it more: And ſhall not we make a ſpirituall adventure in caſting our ſelves upon God, when wee have ſo good a warrant as his *command*, and ſo good an encouragement as his *promiſe*, that hee will not faile thoſe that relye on him? God bids us *draw neare to him*, and hee will *draw neare to us*. Whileſt wee in Gods owne wayes draw neare to him, and labour to entertaine good thoughts of him, hee will delight to ſhew himſelfe favourable unto us. Whileſt we are ſtriving againſt an unbeleeving heart, he will come in and help us, and ſo freſh light will come in.

Pretend not thy unworthineſſe and inabilitie, to keepe thee off from God, for

for this is the way to keepe thee so still; if any thing help us, it must be God; and if ever hee help us, it must be by casting our selves upon him: for then hee will reach out himselfe unto us in the promise of mercy to pardon our sinne, and in the promise of grace to sanctifie our natures. It was a good resolution of the *Lepers, If we enter into the City, the famine is there, and we shall dye* (say they;) *if we sit still, we shall dye also: Let us therefore fall into the hoast of Assyrians, if they save us, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall but dye*; So wee should reason, if wee sit still under the load of our sin, wee shall dye; if we put our selves into the hands of Christ, if hee save us wee shall live, if hee save us not, wee shall but dye. Nay surely, hee will not suffer us to dye. Did ever Christ thrust any backe from him, that put themselves upon him? Unlesse it were, by that meanes to draw them the nearer unto him, as wee see in the *Woman of Canaan*. His denyall was but to increase her importunity. We should therefore doe as shee did, gather all arguments to help our faith. Suppose *I*

Cap. 30.

2 Reg 7.4.

Omnia in rebus humanis spes futurorum agunt.

Cap. 30.

am a dogge (ſaith ſhee) yet I am one of the family, and therefore have right *to the crummes that fall.* So Lord, I have beene a ſinner, yet I am thy creature; and not onely ſo, but ſuch a creature as thou haſt ſet over the reſt of the works of thy hands; and not onely ſo, but one whom thou haſt admitted into thy Church by *Baptiſme*, whereby thou wouldſt binde me to give my ſelfe unto thee before hand; & more than this, thou haſt brought me under the means, and therein haſt ſhewed thy will concerning my turning towards thee. Thou haſt not onely offered mee conditions of peace, but wooed mee by thy Miniſters to give up my ſelfe unto thee, as thine in thy Chriſt. Therefore I dare not ſuſpect thy good meaning towards mee, or queſtion thy intendment, but reſolve to take thy counſell, and put my ſelfe upon thy mercy. I cannot thinke if thou hadſt meant to caſt mee away, and not to owne mee for thine, thou wouldſt ever have kindled theſe deſires in me. But it is not this ſtate I reſt in, my purpoſe is to wait upon thee, untill

untill thou doſt manifeſt thy ſelfe farther unto mee. It is not common favours that will content mee (though I be unworthy of theſe) becauſe I heare of choyſe bleſſings towards thy choſen people, that thou entreſt into a peculiar covenant withall, *ſure mercies*, and ſuch as accompany ſalvation. Theſe be the favours I wait for at thy hand. *O viſit me with the ſalvation of thy choſen.* O remember mee with the favour of thy people, that I may ſee *the good of thy choſen.* Whileſt the ſoule is thus exerciſed, more ſweetneſſe falls upon the *will* and *affections*, whereby they are drawne ſtill neerer unto God. The ſoule is in a getting and a thriving condition; For God delights to ſhew himſelfe gracious to thoſe that ſtrive to be well perſwaded of him, concerning his readineſſe to ſhew mercy to all that look towards him in Chriſt. In worldly things, how doe wee cheriſh hopes upon little grounds? if there ſhineth never ſo little hope of gaine or preferment, wee make after it. Why then ſhould wee forſake our owne mercy, (which God offers to

Cap. 30.

Iſay 55. 3.

Pſ. 106 4,5

Cap. 30. be our owne, if we will embrace it) having such certain grounds for our hope to rest on?

It was the policie of the servants of *Benhadad* to watch if any word of comfort fell from the King of Israel, and when hee named *Benhadad* his *Brother*, they *catched* presently at that, and cheared themselves. *Faith* hath a catching qualitie at whatsoever is neare to lay hold on. Like the branches of the vine, it windeth about that which is next, & stayes it selfe upon it, spreading further and further still. If *nature* taught *Benhadads* servants to lay hold upon any word of comfort that fell from the mouth of a cruell King; Shall not *grace* teach Gods children to lye in wait for any token that hee shall shew for good to them? How should we stretch forth the armes of our *Faith* to him, that *stretcheth out his armes* all the day long *to a rebellious people:* God will never shut his bosome against those, that in an humble obedience flye unto him: wee cannot conceive too graciously of God. Can wee have a fairer offer, then for God

1 Reg. 20. 33.

Esay 65. 2.

God in Christ to make over himselfe unto us? which is more then if hee should make over a thousand worlds; Therefore our chiefe care should be, first by *faith* to make this good, and then to make it usefull unto us, by living upon it as our chiefest portion; which wee shall doe, 1. By proving God to be our God in particular; 2. By improving of it in all the passages of our lives. Cap. 31.

CAP. XXXI.

Meanes of proving and evidencing to our soules, that God is our God.

NOw wee prove it to our soules, that *God* is *ours*, when we take him at his offer; when wee bring nothing but a sense of our owne emptinesse with us, and a good conceit of his *faithfulnesse* and ability to doe us good; when wee answer God in the particular passages of salvation, which wee cannot doe, till hee begins first unto us. Therefore if wee be Gods, it is a certaine signe that 1.

Cap. 31. God is *ours*. If wee chuſe him, we may conclude he hath *choſen us* firſt. If wee
1 Ioh.4.19 *love him*, we may know that *he hath loved us firſt*. If we apprehend him, it is becauſe hee hath apprehended us firſt. Whatſoever affection we ſhew to God, it is but a reflection of his firſt to us. If cold and dark bodies have light and heat in them, it is becauſe the Sun hath ſhined upon them firſt. *Mary* anſwers
1Ioh.20.16 not *Rabboni*, till Chriſt ſaid *Mary* to
Dicat anima, ſecura dicat, Deus meus es tu, qui dicit animæ noſtræ ſalus tua ego ſum. Aug. in Pſal. 132. Cant. 6.3. her. If wee ſay to God I am thine, it is becauſe he hath firſt ſaid unto us, thou art mine; after which, the voice of the faithfull ſoule is, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*. We may know Gods minde to us in heaven, by the returne of our hearts upwards againe to him: Onely as the reflected beames are weaker than the direct, ſo our affections in their returne to God, are farre weaker than his love falling upon us. God will be to us whatſoever wee make him by our *faith* to be; when by grace we anſwer his condition of *truſting*, then hee becomes ours to uſe for our good.

2. 2. Wee may know God to be [*Our God*]

God] when wee pitch and plant all our happineſſe in him, when the deſires of our ſoules are towards him, and wee place all our contentment in him. As this word [*my*] is a terme of *appropriation* ſpringing from a ſpeciall faith, ſo it is a word of *love* and peculiar *affection*, ſhewing that the ſoule doth repoſe and reſt it ſelfe quietly and ſecurely upon God. Thus *David* proves God to bee *his* God, by *early ſeeking of him*, by *thirſting*, and *longing after his preſence*, and that upon good reaſon, *becauſe Gods loving kindneſſe was better to him than life*; This he knew would *ſatisfie his ſoule as with marrow and fatneſſe*. So S. *Paul* proved Chriſt to be his Lord, by *accounting all things elſe as dung and droſſe in compariſon of him.* Cap. 31. Pſal. 63. 1, 2, 3. &c. Phil 3. 8.

Then we make God *our* God, and ſet a Crown of Majeſty upon his head, when wee ſet up a Throne for him in our hearts, where ſelfe-love *before* had ſet up the creature above him; when the heart is ſo unlooſed from the world, that it is ready to part with any thing for Gods ſake, giving him *now* the

Cap. 31.

ſupremacy in our hearts, and bringing downe every high thought in captivity to him; making him our *truſt*, our *love*, our *joy*, our *delight*, our *feare*, our *all*; and whatſoever we eſteem or affect elſe, to eſteem and affect it under him, in him, and for him; When wee cleave to him above all, depending upon him as our chiefe good, and contenting our ſelves in him, as all-ſufficient to give our ſoules fit and full ſatisfaction. When we reſigne up our ſelves to his gracious government, to doe and ſuffer what he will, offering our ſelves and all our ſpirituall ſervices as ſacrifices to him. When *faith* brings God into the ſoule as *ours*, we not onely *love him*, but love him *dearely*, making it appeare, that when wee are at good tearmes with God, we are at a point for other things. How many are there that will adventure the loſſe of the love of God, for a thing of nothing? and redeeme the favour of men with the loſſe of Gods. Certaine it is whatſoever we eſteeme, or affect moſt, that whatſoever it be in it ſelfe, yet wee make it our God. The beſt

Amor tuus, Deus tuus.

beſt of us all may take ſhame to our ſelves herein, in that we doe not give God his due place in us, but ſet up ſome *Idoll* or other in our hearts above him. Cap. 31.

When the ſoule can without hypocriſie ſay [*My God*] it ingageth us to univerſall and unlimited obedience, we ſhall be ambitious of doing that which may be acceptable and well pleaſing to him; and therefore this is prefixed as a ground before the *Commandements*, enforcing obedience; *I am the Lord thy God*, therefore *thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me*; whomſoever elſe wee *obey*, it muſt be *in the Lord*, becauſe wee ſee a beam of Gods authority in them; and it is no prejudice to any inferiour authority, to preferre Gods authority before it, in caſe of difference one from the other. 3. Exod. 20. *Nemini fit injuria cui præponitur Deus.*

When we know we are a *peculiar people*, wee cannot but bee *zealous of good workes*. *If I be a Father, where is mine honour?* Speciall relations are ſpeciall enforcements to duty. Tit. 2. 14. Mal. 1. 6.

4. The *Spirit of God* which knowes the deep things of God, and the depths of 4.

Cap. 31. of our hearts, doth reveale this mutuall intereſt betwixt God, and thoſe that are *his*, it being a principall worke of the Spirit to ſeale this unto the ſoule, by diſcovering ſuch a cleare and particular light in the uſe of meanes, as ſwaieth the ſoule to yeeld up it ſelfe wholy to GOD. When wee truly *truſt*, wee
2 Tim. 1. 12 may ſay with S. *Paul*, *I know whom I have truſted*; he knew both *that* he truſted, and *whom* hee truſted. The *Spirit* of God that reveales God to be *ours*, and ſtirres up faith in him, both reveales this truſt to our ſoules, and the intereſt wee have in God thereby. *The Lord is*
Lam. 3. 24. *my portion, ſaith my ſoule:* but God ſaid ſo to it firſt. If inſtinct of nature teaches *dammes* to know their young ones, and their *young ones* them, in the middeſt of thoſe that are alike; ſhall not the Spirit of God much more teach the ſoule to know its *owne* father? As none knowes what is in man, but the *ſpirit* of man, ſo none knowes what love God beares to thoſe that are *his*, but the Spirit of God in *his*: All the light in the world cannot diſcover the Sunne unto

us,

us, onely it discovers it selfe by its own beames. So all the Angels and Saints in heaven cannot discover to our soules the love that is in the breast of God towards us, but onely the Spirit of God, which *sheds it into our hearts*. The Spirit onely teaches this language, to say *My God*, It is infused onely into sanctified hearts; and therefore oft-times *meane men* enjoy it, when *great, wise* and *learned* persons are strangers to it. Cap. 31. Rom. 5. 5. Mat. 11. 25

5 The Spirit when it witnesseth this to us, is called the *Spirit of Adoption*, and hath alwayes accompanying of it a spirit of *supplication*, whereby with a familiar, yet reverend boldnesse, wee lay open our hearts to God as to a deare Father; All others are strangers to this heavenly entercourse. In straits *they* runne to their friends and carnall shifts, whereas an heire of heaven runs to his Father, and tells him of all. 5.

6 Those that are Gods, are knowne to be his by speciall love-tokens that hee bestowes upon them. As 1. the speciall graces of his Spirit. Princes children are knowne by their costly jewels, and 6. Speciall favours shew God to be our God. 1.

Cap. 31. and rich ornaments. It is not common *gifts*, and glorious *parts* that set a character upon us to be Gods, but grace to use those gifts, in humility and love, to the glory of the giver.

2. 2. There is in them a sutableness and connaturalness of heart to all that is spirituall, to whatsoever hath Gods stampe upon it, as his *truth* and his *children*, and that because they are *his*. By this likeness of disposition, wee are fashioned to a communion with him: Can two walke together and not be agreed? It is a certaine evidence that we are Gods in Christ, if the Spirit of God hath wrought in us any impression like unto Christ, who is the *image* of his Father; both Christs looking upon *us*, and our looking upon Christ by faith (as *ours*) hath a transforming and conforming power.

3. 3. Spirituall comforts in distresse, such as the world can neither give, nor take away, shew that God lookes upon the soules of his with another eye, then he beholdeth others. He sends a *secret* messenger that reports his *peculiar* love to

to their hearts. He knowes *their ſoules*, and feeds them with his *hidden Manna*; the inward peace they feele, is not in freedome from trouble, but in freeneſſe with God in the midſt of trouble. Cap. 31.

4. Seaſonable and ſanctified corrections whereby we are kept from being led away by the errour of the wicked, ſhew Gods fatherly care over us as *his*. Who will trouble himſelfe in correcting another mans childe? yet wee oftner complaine of the ſmart wee feele, than thinke of the tender heart and hand that ſmites us, untill our ſpirits be ſubdued, and then we reape the quiet fruit of righteouſneſſe. Where croſſes *worke together for the beſt*, we may know *that we love God*, and are loved of him. Thriving in a ſinfull courſe, is a black marke of one that is not Gods. 4. Rom. 8. 28.

7. Then wee make it appeare that God is our God, when wee ſide with him, and are for him and his cauſe in ill times. When God ſeems to cry out unto us, *Who is on my ſide, who?* Then if we can ſay as thoſe in *Eſay*, whereof one ſayes, *I am the Lords*, and another *calls himſelfe* 7. 2 Reg. 9. 32

Cap. 31. Esay 44. 6. *himselfe by the name of* Jacob, and another *subscribes with his hand unto the Lord*, its a blessed signe. Thus the Patriarchs, and Prophets, Apostles, and Heb. 11. 16 Martyrs, were not ashamed of God, and God was not ashamed to owne them. Provided that this boldnesse for God proceed not onely from a conviction of the judgement, but from spirituall experience of the goodnesse of the cause, whereby wee can justifie in heart what wee justifie in words. Otherwise men may contend for that with others, which they have no interest in themselves. The life must witnesse for God, as well as the tongue: it is oft easier for corrupt nature to part with life rather then with lust.

This siding with God, is with a separation from whatsoever is contrary. God useth this as an argument to come out of *Babylon*, because *wee are* his *people*; Rev. 18. 4. *Come out of her* My *people*. Religion is nothing else, but a gathering and a binding of the soule close to God: that fire which gathers together the gold, separates the drosse. Nature drawes out that

that which is wholsome in meates, and severs the contrary. The good that is to be had by God, is by cleaving to him, and him *onely*. God loves an ingenuous and full protestation, if called to it. It shewes the coldnesse of the times whē there is not heat enough of zeale to separate from a contrary faith. God is a jealous God; and so we shall finde him at last. When the day of severing comes, then they that have stood for him, shall not onely be *his*, but his *treasure*, and his *jewels*. Cap. 31. Mal. 3. 17.

There is none of us all, but may some time or other fall into such a great extremitie, that when wee looke about us, wee shall finde none to help us: at which time wee shall throughly know, what it is to have comfort from heaven, and a God to goe unto. If there be any thing in the world worth labouring for, it is the getting sound evidence to our soules that God is *ours*. What madnesse is it to spend all our labour, to possesse our selves of the *Cisterne*, when the *fountaine* is offered to us? O beloved, the whole world cannot

Cap. 31. not weigh againſt this *one comfort*, that God is ours. All things laid in the other ballance, would be too light. A *Moath* may corrupt, a *theefe* may take away that we have here, but who can take our God away? Though God doth convey ſome comfort to us by theſe things, yet when they are gone he reſerves the comfort in himſelf ſtill, and can convey *that*, and more in a purer and ſweeter way, where hee plants the grace of *faith* to fetch it from him. Why then ſhould we weaken our intereſt in God, for any thing this earth affords? What unworthy wretches are thoſe, that to pleaſe a ſinfull man, or to feede a baſe luſt, or to yeeld to a wicked cuſtome, will (as much as in them lyeth) loſe their intereſt in God? Such little conſider what an excellent priviledge it is to have a *ſure refuge* to flye unto in time of trouble. God wants not wayes to maintaine *his*, without being beholding to the devill. He hath all help hid in himſelfe, and will then moſt ſhew it, when it ſhall make moſt for his owne glory. If God be *ours*, it is a ſhame

ſhame to bee beholding to the devill, that ever it ſhould bee ſaid, *Sathan* by baſe courſes hath made us rich. God thinkes any outward thing too meane for his children, ſevered from himſelfe, therefore he gives his *Son* the expreſſe *image of himſelfe* unto them. For which cauſe *David* when he had even ſtudied to reckon up the number of Gods choiſe bleſſings, concludes with advancing of *this* above all, *yea rather happy are they whoſe God is the Lord.* If this will not ſatisfie the ſoule, what can a Labour therefore to bring thy ſoule to this point with God, *Lord if thou ſeeſt it fit, take away all from mee, ſo thou leaveſt me thy ſelfe: whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee.*

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Pſ. 144. 15.

Pſal. 73 25

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CAP. XXXII.

Of improving our evidences for comfort in severall passages of our lives.

We ought to branch out the severall excellencies in God for our speciall uses.

THat wee lose not any measure of comfort in this so sweet a priviledge, wee must labour for skill to improve, & implead the same in the severall passages and occasions of our lives, and let it appeare in the retaile, that whatsoever is in God is *mine*: If I am *in a perplexed condition*, his *wisdome* is mine: If *in great danger*, his *power* is mine; If I lie sighing *under the burthen of sinne*, his *grace* is mine: If in any want, his *all-sufficiency* is mine. *My God* (saith S. *Paul*) *will supply all your wants.* If in any danger, *I am thine Lord*, save mee, I am thine, the price of thy Sonnes bloud, let mee not bee lost, thou hast given me the *earnest* of thy Spirit, and set thy seale upon me for thy own, let mee neither lose my bargaine, nor thou thine. What is Religion it selfe but a spirituall *bond?* whereby the soule is tyed to God as its owne, and then

Phil. 4. 19.

then fingles out of God whatſoever is needfull for any occaſion: and ſo binds God with his owne covenant and promiſe. *Lord thou haſt made thy ſelfe to be mine, therefore now ſhew thy ſelfe ſo, and be exalted in thy wiſdome, goodneſſe, and power, for my defence. To walke comfortably in my Chriſtian courſe, I need much grace, ſupply me out of thy rich ſtore. I need wiſdome to goe in and out inoffenſively before others, furniſh me with thy ſpirit. I need patience and comfort, thou that art the God of all conſolation, beſtow it on me.* Cap. 32.

In time of deſertion put Chriſt betwixt God and thy ſoule, and learne to appeale from God *out* of Chriſt, to God *in* Chriſt. Lord looke upon my Saviour, that is neare unto thee as thy *Sonne*, neare to mee as my *Brother*, and now intercedes at thy right hand for mee; though I have ſinned, yet he hath ſuffered, and ſhed his precious blood to make my peace. When wee are in any trouble, let us ſtill wait on him, and lye at his feet, and never let him goe, till he caſt a gracious looke upon us.

So, if wee be to deale with God, for

Cap. 32. the *Church* abroad, we may alleadge unto him that whatsoever provocations are therein, and deformity in regard of abuses and scandals: yet it is his *Church*, his *people*, his *inheritance*, his name is called upon *in it*, and the enemies of *it* are *his* enemies. God hath engaged himselfe to the friends of the *Church*, Psal. 122.6 that *they shall prosper that love it*, and therefore we may with a holy boldnesse presse him, for a blessing upon the same.

So for our *Children* and posterity, we may encline God to respect them, because they are under his *Covenant*, who hath promised to be *our God*, and the Iohn 17. God of *our Seed: Thine they were, thou gavest them mee: all that I have is thine, these are those children which thou of thy rich grace hast given me. They are thine, more then mine. I am but a meanes under thee to bring them into the world, and to bee a Nurse unto thy children; Take care therefore of thine owne children I beseech thee (especially) when I can take no care of them my selfe, thou slumbrest not, thou dyest not, I must.*

Flesh

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Flesh and *blood* think nothing is cared for, but what it seeth cared for by it selfe. It hath no eyes to see a guard of *Providence*, a guard of *Angels*. It takes no knowledge that that is best cared for, that God cares for. Those that have God for *their God*, have enlarged hearts as they have enlarged comforts. They have an everlasting spring that supplies them in all wants, refreshes them in all troubles, and then runnes most clearely and freshly, when all other streames in the world are dryed and stopt up. Were wee skilfull in the *art* of *faith*, to improve so great an interest, what in the world could much dismay us? *faith* will set God against all.

It should fill our hearts with an holy indignation against our selves, if either we rest in a condition, wherein we cannot truly say *God* is [Our God] or (if when we can in some sincerity of heart say *this*) that we make no better advantage thereby, and maintaine not our selves answerable to such a condition. What a shame is it for a Noble mans

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ſonne to live like a begger? for a great rich man to live like a poore peaſant? to famiſh at a banquet? to fall when we have ſo many ſtayes to lay hold on? Whereas if wee could make this cleare to our ſoules, that *God* is *ours*, and then take up our thoughts with the great riches wee have in *him*, laid open in Chriſt, and in the promiſes, wee need trouble our ſelves about nothing, but onely get a large veſſell of *faith*, to receive what is offered, nay enforced upon us.

When we can ſay, *God* is *our God*, it is more then if wee could ſay, Heaven is mine; or whatever good the creature affords, is mine. Alas, what is all this, to be able to ſay, *God is mine*, who hath in him the ſweetnes of all theſe things, and infinite more? If God bee *ours*, goodneſſe it ſelfe is *ours*. If hee be not *ours*, though wee had all things elſe, yet ere long nothing would be *ours*. What a wondrous comfort is this, that God hath put himſelfe over to be *ours*? That a beleeving ſoule may ſay with as great confidence (and greater too) that *God* is

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is his, then hee can say his house is his, his treasure is his, his friends are his? Nothing is so much *ours* as God is ours, because by his being ours in *covenant*, all other things become *ours*: And if God be once *ours*, well may wee *trust* in him. *God* and *ours* joyned together, make up the full comfort of a Christian. [*God*] there is all to be had; but what is that to *me*, unlesse he be *my God? Al-sufficiency with propriety, fully stayeth the soule.*

David was now banished from the Sanctuary, from his friends, habitation, and former comforts; but was he banished from his God? No, God was *his* God still. When *riches*, and *friends*, and *life* it selfe cease to be *ours*, yet God never loseth *his* right in us, nor wee our interest in him. This comfort that *God* is *ours*, reacheth unto the *resurrection of our bodies*, and to *life everlasting*. God is the God of *Abraham*, (and so of every true beleever) even when his body is turned into dust. Hence it is that *the loving kindnesse of the Lord is better than life*, because when *life* departs, yet wee

Cap. 32. live for ever in *him*. When *Moses* saw the people drop away so fast in the *wilderneſſe*, and wither like graſſe, *thou art our foundation* (ſaith he) *from one generation to another: thou art God from everlaſting to everlaſting*. When wee leave the world, and are no more ſeene here, yet wee have a dwelling place in God for ever. God is ours from everlaſting in *election*, and to everlaſting in *glory*, protecting us here, and glorifying us hereafter. *David* that claimed God to be *his God* is gone, but *Davids God* is alive. And *David* himſelfe (*though his fleſh ſee corruption*, yet) is alive in his God ſtill.

That which is ſaid of wily perſons that are full of fetches, and windings, and turnings in the world, that ſuch will never breake, may much more truly bee ſaid of a right godly man, that hath but one grand policie, to ſecure him in all dangers, which is to runne to his God, as to his tower of offence and defence: ſuch a one will never be at a deſperate loſſe ſo long as God hath any credit, becauſe hee never faileth thoſe that

that flye unto him, and that becauſe his mercy and truth never failes. The very *lame* and the *blind*, the moſt ſhiftleſſe creatures when they had gotten the *ſtrong hold of Syon*, thought then they might ſecurely *ſcorne David* and *his hoaſt*, becauſe though they were weak in themſelves, yet their *hold* was ſtrong; but wee ſee their hold failed them at length, which a Chriſtians will never doe. Cap. 32. 2 Sam. 5. 6, 7.

But God ſeemes to have ſmall care of thoſe that are his *in the world, thoſe who beleeve themſelves to be* his jewels, *are counted the* off-ſcouring of the world, *and moſt deſpiſed.* Obiect.

We muſt know that ſuch have a glorious life in God, but it is *hidden with Chriſt in God*, from the eyes of the world, and ſometimes from their *owne*; here they are hidden under infirmities, afflictions, and diſgraces, but yet never ſo hidden, but that God ſometimes lets downe a beame of comfort and ſtrength, which they would not loſe to be freed from their preſent condition, though never ſo grievous. God comes Anſw. Coloſſ. 3.

Cap. 32. comes more immediatly to them now, than formerly hee was used; nay, even when God seemes to forsake them (and to be their enemy) yet they are supported with such inward strength, that they are able to make good their claim with Christ their head, and cry *My God* still; God never so departs, but hee alwayes leaves somewhat behind him, which drawes and keepes the heart to him. Wee are like poore *Hagar*, who
Gen. 21. 19 when the *bottle of water* was spent, *fell a crying*, when there was a fountaine close by, but her teares hindered her from seeing it; When things goe ill with us in our trades and callings, and all is spent, *then* our spirits droope, and wee are at our wits end, as if God were not where he was. Oh consider, if we had all and had not God, wee had nothing: If we have nothing, and have God, wee have enough, for wee have him that hath all, and more than all at his command. If wee had all other comforts that our hearts can desire, yet if God withdraw himselfe, what remaines but a curse and emptinesse? What makes

heaven

heaven but the presence of God? And what makes *hel* but the absence of God? Let God be in any condition, though never so ill, yet it is comfortable, and usually wee finde more of God *in* trouble, than when wee are *out* of trouble; the comforts of Religion never come till other faile. Cordials are kept for faintings. When a curtaine and a vaile is drawne betwixt us and the creature, then our eyes are onely upward to God, and hee is more clearely seene of us. Cap. 32.

In the division of things, God bequeaths himselfe to those that are *his*, for their portion, as the best portion he can give them. There are many goodly things in the world, but none of these are a Christians portion, there is in him to supply all good, and remove all ill, untill the time come that we stand in need of no other good. It is our chief *wisdome* to know him, our *holinesse* to love him, our *happinesse* to enjoy him. There is in him to be had, whatsoever can truly make us happy. Wee goe to our *treasure*, and our *portion* in all our wants, God, the Saints portion.

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wants, we live by it, and value our ſelves by it. God is ſuch a portion, that the more wee ſpend on him, the more wee may. *Our ſtrength may faile*, and *our heart may faile*, but *God is our portion for ever.* Every thing elſe teaches us by the vanity and vexation wee finde in them, that our happineſſe is not in them, they ſend us to God; they may make us worſe, but better they cannot. Our nature is above them, and ordained for a greater good; they can goe but along with us for a while, and their end ſwallowes up all the comfort of their beginning, as *Pharaohs* leane Kine ſwallowed up the fat. If wee have no better portion here than theſe things, we are like to have hell for our portion hereafter. What a ſhame will it be hereafter when we are ſtript of all, that it ſhould be ſaid, Loe this is the man that tooke not God for his portion. If God be once ours, he goes for ever along with us, and when earth will hold us no longer, heaven ſhall. Who that hath his ſenſes about him, would periſh for want of water, when there is a fountaine by him?

Pſal 73.26

him? or for hunger that is at a feast? God alone is a rich portion: O then let us labour for a large *faith*, as we have a large *object*; If we had a thousand times more faith, wee should have a thousand times more increase of Gods blessings. When the Prophet came to the *widdowes house*, as many vessels as shee had *were filled with oyle*; we are straitned in our owne faith, but not straitned in our God. It fals out oft in this world, that Gods people are like *Israel* at the red sea, invironed with dangers on all sides: What course have wee then to take, but onely to looke up and wait for the salvation of our God? This is a *breast* full of *consolation*, let us teach our hearts to suck, and draw comfort from hence. Cap. 32. 1 Reg. 17. 14.

Is God *our God*, and will he suffer any thing to befall us for our hurt? Will he lay any more upon us, than he gives us strength to beare? Will hee suffer any winde to blow upon us, but for good? Doth he not set us before his face? Will a Father or Mother suffer a child to be wronged in their presence, if they can help

Cap. 32. help it? Will a friend ſuffer his friend to be injured, if he may redreſſe him? And will God that hath put theſe affections into Parents and friends, neglect the care of thoſe hee hath taken ſo neere unto himſelfe? No ſurely, his *eyes* are open to looke upon their condition; his *eares* are open to their prayers; a Mal. 3. 16. *booke of remembrance* is written of all their good deſires, ſpeeches, and actions; hee hath *bottles* for all their teares, their very *ſighs* are not *hid from him*; Iſay 46. 16. hee hath written them upon the *palmes of his hands*, and cannot but continually looke upon them. Oh let us prize the favour of ſo good a God, who though he dwels *on high*, yet will regard things *ſo low*, and not neglect the meane eſtate of any; Nay, eſpecially, delights to be called the *comforter of his Elect*, and the God of thoſe that are in miſery, and have none to flye unto but himſelfe.

But wee muſt know that God *onely* thus graciouſly viſits his owne *children*, he viſits with his choiſeſt favours thoſe onely that *feare his Name*. As for thoſe that either ſecretly undermine, or openly

openly oppoſe the cauſe, and Church of God, and joyne with his enemies; ſuch as ſavour not the things of God, but commit ſpirituall Idolatry, and Adultery with Gods enemies, *the world*, and the *devill*; God will anſwer theſe, as once he did the *Iſraelites*, (when in their neceſſity they would have forced acquaintance upon him) *Goe to the gods whom you have ſerved*, to the *great men* whoſe perſons you have obeyed for advantage: to your *riches*, to your *pleaſure*, which you have loved more than God or goodneſſe: you would not loſe a baſe *cuſtome*, an *oath*, a *ſuperfluity*, a thing of nothing for mee, therefore I will not owne you now. Such men are more impudent than the *devill* himſelf, that will claime acquaintance with God at laſt, when they have carryed themſelves as his enemies all their dayes. *Sathan* could tell *Paul* and *Silas*, they were *the ſervants of the living God*, but he would not make that plea for himſelfe, knowing that *he* was a curſed creature.

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Iudg. 10. 14

Act. 16. 17.

Miſerable then is their condition who

Cap. 32. who *live in the world*, (nay in the Church) *without God*. Such are in a worse estate than *Pagans* and *Iews*; for living in the house of God, they are *strangers* from God, and from the *covenant of grace*; usurping the name of Christians, having indeed nothing to doe with Christ.

Some of these like spirituall vagabonds, as *Cain*, excommunicate themselves from Gods presence in the use of the *meanes*; or rather like *devils*, that will have nothing to doe with God, because they are loath to be tormented before their time; they thinke every good Sermon, an arraigning of them, and therefore keep out of reach.

Others will present themselves under the *meanes*, and carry some savour away with them of what they heare, but it is onely till they meet with the next temptation, unto which they yeelde themselves presently slaves. These shrowd themselves under a *generall* profession, as they did, who called themselves *Iewes*, and were nothing lesse. But alas, an empty title, will bring

bring an empty comfort at laſt. It was cold comfort to the *rich man* in flames, that *Abraham* called him *ſonne*. Or to *Iudas*, that Chriſt called him *friend*. Or to the rebellious *Iewes*, that God ſtyles them *his people*. Such as our profeſſion is, ſuch will our comfort be. True profeſſion of Religion is another thing then moſt men take it to be; it is made up of the outward duty, and the *inward man* too; which is indeed the life and ſoule of all. What the heart doth not in Religion, is not done. Cap. 32. Luke 16. *Quod cor non facit non fit.*

God cares for no retainers, that will onely weare his *livery*, but ſerve themſelves. *What haſt thou to doe to take his name into thy mouth, and hateſt to be reformed?* *Saul* lived in the boſome of the *Church*, yet (being a cruell Tyrant) when he was in a deſperate plunge, his outward *profeſſion* did him no good. And therefore when he was invironed with his enemies, he uttered this dolefull complaint, *God hath forſaken mee, and the Philiſtims are upon mee*: A pittifull caſe; yet ſo will it be with all thoſe that *reſt* in an outward profeſſion, thinking Pſal 50. 1 Sam 28. 15.

Cap. 32. ing it enough to complement with God, when their hearts are not right within them. Such will at length bee forced to cry, *Sickneſſe* is upon mee, *death* is upon me, *hell* is before me, and God hath forſaken mee. I would none of God heretofore, *Now* God will have none of me. When *David* himſelfe had offended God by *numbring the people*, then God counted him but plaine *David*, 2 Sam.24. 12. *Goe and ſay to David, &c.* whereas before when hee purpoſed to build a 2 Sam.7.5. *Temple*, then *goe tell my ſervant David.* When the *Iſraelites* had ſet up an *Idoll*, Exod.32.7 then God Fathers them on *Moſes*, THY *people which thou haſt brought out of Egypt*, hee would not owne them as at other times, then; *they are* MY *people* ſtill whileſt they keep covenant. No care, no preſent comfort in this neere *relation.*

The price of the *Pearl* is not known till all elſe be ſold, and wee ſee the neceſſary uſe of it. So the worth of God in Chriſt is never diſcerned, till we ſee our loſt and undone condition without him, till conſcience flyes in our faces, and

and dragges us to the brink of hell; *then* if ever we taſte *how good the Lord is*, wee will ſay, *Bleſſed is the people whoſe God is the Lord.* Heretofore I have heard of his loving kindneſſe, but that is not a thouſand part of what I ſee and feele. The joy I now apprehend is unutterable, *unconceiveable.* Cap. 32.

Oh then when wee have gotten our ſoules poſſeſt of God, let our ſtudy be, to preſerve our ſelves in his love, to walke cloſe with him, that he may delight to abide with us, and never forſake us. How baſely doth the *Scripture* ſpeak of whatſoever ſtands in our way? it makes nothing of them. What is *man* but *vanity*, and *leſſe than* vanity? *All Nations* but as a *drop of the bucket*, as the *duſt of a ballance*; things not at all conſiderable. *Fleſh* lookes upon them as through a multiplying glaſſe, making them greater than they are; but *faith* (as God doth) ſees them as nothing. Iay 40. 15.

This is ſuch a bleſſed condition, as may well challenge all our diligence in labouring to be aſſured of it; neither is it to bee attained or maintained without What preſerves the ſenſe of Gods favour.

Cap. 32.

out the ſtrength and prime of our care. I ſpeake eſpecially of, and in regard of the ſenſe and comfort of it. For, the ſenſe of Gods favour will not be kept, without keeping him in our beſt affections above all things in the world, without keeping of our hearts alwayes cloſe and neere to him, which cannot bee without keeping a moſt narrow watch over our looſe and unſetled hearts, that are ready to ſtray from God, and fall to the creature. It cannot be kept without exact and circumſpect walking, without conſtant ſelf-deniall, without a continuall preparation of ſpirit, to want and forſake any thing that God ſeeth fit to take from us.

Our pains cannot bee ſpēt to better purpoſe than in croſſing of our ſelves for God.

But what of all this? Can we croſſe our ſelves, or ſpend our labours to better purpoſe? one ſweet beame of Gods countenance will requite all this. Wee beat not the ayre, we plow not in the ſand, neither ſow in a barren ſoile, God is no barren wilderneſſe. Nay, hee never ſhewes ſo much of *himſelfe*, as in ſuffering, and parting with any thing for him, and denying our ſelves of *that*, which

which wee thinke ſtands not with his will. Great perſons require great obſervance. We can deny our ſelves, and have mens perſons in great admiration, for hope of ſome advantage; and is any more willing and more able to advance us than the great Al-ſufficient God? A Chriſtian indeed, undergoes more troubles, takes more paines (eſpecially with his owne heart) than others doe. But what are theſe to his gaines? What returne ſo rich, as trading with God? What comforts ſo great, as theſe that are fetched from the fountaine? One day ſpent in enjoying the light of Gods countenance, is ſweeter than a thouſand without it. Wee ſee here, when *David* was not onely ſhut out from all comforts, but lay under many grievances, what a fruitfull uſe hee makes of this, that God was his God. It upholdeth his dejected, it ſtilleth his unquiet ſoule: it leadeth him to *the rock that was higher than he*, and there ſtayeth him. It filleth him with comfortable hopes of better times to come. It ſets him above himſelfe, and all troubles and feares whatſoever. Cap. 32.

Cap. 32. Therefore wait ſtill in the uſe of *meanes* till God ſhine upon thee; yea, though wee know our ſinnes in Chriſt are pardoned, yet there is ſomething more that a gracious heart waits for, that is, a good looke from God, a further enlargement of heart, and an *eſtabliſhing* in grace. It was not enough for *David* to have his ſinnes pardoned, but to *recover the joy of ſalvation*, and *freedome of ſpirit*. Therefore the ſoul ſhould alwayes be in a waiting condition, even untill it bee filled with the fulneſſe of God, as much as it is capable of. Neither is it quiet alone, or comfort alone, that the ſoule longs after, no, nor the favour of God *alone*, but a gracious heart to walke worthy of God. It reſts not whileſt any thing remaines, that may breed the leaſt ſtrangeneſſe betwixt God and us.

Pſal. 51.

CAP.

Cap. 33.

CAP. XXXIII.

Of experience, and faith, and how to wait on God comfortably. Helps thereto.

[*My God.*]

THese words further imply a speciall experience, that *Davids* soule had felt of the goodnesse of God, hee had found God distilling the comfort of his goodnesse and truth through the promises, and he knew he should finde God againe the same hee was, if he put him in minde of his former gracious dealing. His soule *knew right well*, how *good God was*, and he could seale to those truths he had found comfort by, therefore hee thus speakes to his soule, *My soule*, what *my soule*, that hast found God so good, so oft, so many wayes, thou *My soule* to be discouraged, having God, and *My God*, with whom I have taken so much sweet counsell, and felt so much comfort from, and found alwayes heretofore to sticke so close unto me? Why shouldst thou *now* bee in such

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such a case, as if God and thou had beene strangers one to another. If wee could treasure up experiments, the former part of our life would come in to help the latter, and the longer we live, the richer in *faith* we should be. Even as in victories, every former overthrow of an enemy, helps to obtaine a succeeding victory. The use of a sanctified memory, is to lose nothing that may help in time of need. Hee had need be a well tryed, and a known friend, upon whom we lay all our salvation and comfort.

God to be trusted, though never tryed.

We ought to trust God upon *other* grounds, though wee had never tryed him: but when hee helps our *faith* by former *experience*, this should strengthen our confidence, and shore up our spirits, and put us on to goe more cheerefully to God, as to a tried friend. If we were well read in the story of our owne lives, wee might have a *divinity* of our owne, drawne out of the observation of Gods particular dealing towards us; we might say *this* & *this truth*, I dare venture upon, I have found it true,

true, I dare build all my happineſſe upon it. As *Paul*, *I know whom I have truſted*, I have tryed him, he never yet failed me, I am not *now* to learn how faithfull hee is to thoſe that are *his*. Every new experience is a new knowledge of God, and ſhould fit us for new encounters. If wee have been good in former times, God remembers the *kindneſſe of our youth*; wee ſhould therefore remember the kindneſſe of God even from our youth. Evidence of what we have felt, helps our faith in that, which for the preſent we feele not. Cap. 33. Ier. 2. 2.

Though it be one thing to live by *faith*, and another thing to live by *ſight*, yet the more wee ſee, and feele, and taſte of God, the more wee ſhall be led to rely on him, for that which as yet we neither ſee nor feele: *Becauſe thou haſt been my helper* (ſaith David) *therefore in the ſhadow of thy wings will I rejoyce*. The time was Lord, when thou ſhewedſt thy ſelfe a gracious Father to me, and thou art unchangeable in thy nature, in thy love, and in thy gifts. Pſal. 63. 7.

Yea, when there is no preſent evidence,

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evidence, but God ſhewes himſelfe as contrary to us, yet a former taſte of Gods goodneſſe will enable to lay claime unto him ſtill. Gods concealing of himſelfe is but a wiſe diſcipline for a time, untill wee bee enabled to beare the full revealing of himſelfe unto us for ever. In the meane time, though we have ſome ſight and feeling of God, yet our conſtant living is not by it: the evidence of that we ſee not, is that which more conſtantly upholds the ſoule, than the evidence of any thing we ſee or feele.

Yea, though our experience by reaſon of our not minding of it in trouble, ſeemes many times to ſtand us in no ſtead, but we fare as if God had never looked in mercy upon us: Yet (even here) ſome vertue remaines of former ſenſe, which with the preſent ſpirit of faith, helps us to looke upon God as *ours*. As wee have a preſent ſtrength from food received, and digeſted before; veſſels are ſomething the better for that liquor they keep not, but runs through them.

But

Cap. 33. Faith *alone* a sufficient support.

But if experience should wholly fail, there is such a divine power in faith, as a very little beame of it, having no other help then a naked *promise*, will uphold the soul; howsoever we must neglect no help, for God oft suspends his comfort, till wee have searched all our helps. Though we see *no light*, yet we ought to search all crevises for light, and rejoyce in the least beame of light, that wee may see day by. It is the nature of true *faith*, to search and pry into every corner; and if after all, nothing appeares, then it casts it selfe upon God, as in the first conversion, when it had nothing to looke upon, but the offer of *free* mercy. If at that time without former experience, wee did *trust God*, Why not now, when we have forgotten our experience? the chiefe grounds of trusting God, are alwaies the same, whether we feel, or feele not; nay, though for the present wee feele the contrary, *faith* will never leave wrastling, till it hath gotten a blessing. When *faith* is driven to work *alone*, having nothing but God, and his bare promise

Cum omnium incertus sit eventus, ad ea accedimus de quibus bene sperandum esse credimus. Sen.

Cap. 33.

promise to relye upon, then God thinks it lies upon his credit to shew himselfe as a *God* unto us. Gods power in creating light out of darknes, is never more exalted, then when a guilty soule is lifted up by God to look for mercy, even when hee seems armed with justice, to execute vengeance upon him, then the soule is brought to a neere conformity unto Christ, who 1. when hee had the guilt of the sins of the whole world upon him; 2. when he was forsaken, and that after hee had enjoyed the sweeteſt communion with his Father that ever creature could doe; and not only so, but 3. felt the weight of Gods just displeasure against sin; and 4. was abased lower than ever any creature was: yet *still* hee held fast God, as *his God*.

The conformity of the soul to Christ.
1.
2.
3.
4.

In earthly matters, if we have a *Title* to any thing by gift, contract, inheritance, or howsoever, wee will not be wrangled out of our right. And shall we not maintain our right in God, against all the tricks and cavils of Satan, and our own hearts? We must labor to have something, that we may shew that we

are

are within the covenant. If we be never so little entred into the covenāt, we are safe. And herein lies the speciall comfort of sincerity, that though our grace be little, yet it is of the right stamp, and shews us, that we are servants, and sons, though unworthy to be so. Here a little truth will goe far. Hence it is that the Saints in all their extremities, still alledg something, that shews that they are within the covenant, *We are thy children, thy people, and thy servants, &c.* God is mindfull of his *covenant*, but is well pleased, that we should mind him of it too, and mind it our selves to make use of it, as *David* doth here. He knew if he could bring *his* soule to *his* God, all would be quiet. Cap. 33.

God is so ready to mercy, that he *delighteth* in it, and delighteth in Christ, through whom hee may shew mercy notwithstāding his justice, as being fully satisfied in Christ. *Mercy* is his *name* that he will be known by. It is his *glory* which we behold in the face of *Christ*, who is nothing but grace and mercy it selfe. Nay, he pleads reasons for mercy, even from the sinfulnesse and misery of

Cap. 33. of his creature, and maintaines his *owne mercy* against all the wrangling cavills of flesh and blood, that would put mercy from them; and hearken more willingly to *Sathans* objections, than *Gods* arguments, till at length God subdues their spirits so farre, as they become ashamed for standing out so long against him. How ready will God be to shew mercy to us when we *seeke it*, that thus presseth upon us, when wee seeme to refuse it? If God should take advantage of our waywardnesse, what would become of us? Sathans course is to discourage those that God would have encouraged, and to encourage those whom God never speakes peace unto, and hee thinkes to gaine both wayes. Our care therefore should be, when we resolve upon Gods wayes, to labour that no discouragement fasten upon us, seeing *God* and his *Word* speake all comfort to us.

And becaus the best of a Christian is to come, wee should raise up our spirits to *waite* upon God, for that mercy which is yet to come. All inferiour

waitings

waitings for good things *here*, doe but traine us up in the comfortable expectation of the maine. Cap. 33.

This *waiting* on God, requires a great strength of grace, by reason not onely 1. of the excellency of the things waited for, (which are farre beyond any thing wee can hope for in the world.) But 2. in regard of the *long day* which God takes before hee performeth his promise, and 3. from thence the tediousnesse of delay. 4. The many troubles of life in our way. 5. The great opposition we meet with in the world. 6. and *scandalls* oft times even from them that are in great esteeme for Religion. 7. together with the untowardnesse of our nature in being ready to be put off by the least discouragement. In these respects there must be more than a humane spirit to hold up the soule, and carry it along to the end of that which we wait for. Waiting difficult. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

But if God be *our* God, that love which engaged him to binde *himselfe* to us in precious promises; will furnish *us* likewise with grace needfull, till we be

Cap. 33. be poſſeſſed of them. Hee will give us leave to depend upon him both for happineſſe, and all ſanctifying and quieting graces, which may ſupport the ſoule, till it come to its perfect reſt in God. For God ſo quiets the hearts of his children, as withall, he makes them better, and fitter for *that* which he provides for them; *grace* and *peace* goe together; *Our God* is the God of grace and peace, of ſuch graces as breed peace.

1. 1. As he is a God of *love*, nay love *it ſelfe* to us, ſo a taſte of *his love*, raiſing up *our* love is better than *wine*, full of nothing but encouragement; it will fetch up a ſoule from the deepeſt diſcouragement; this grace quickneth all other graces, it hath ſo much ſpirits in it as will ſweeten all conditions. *Love* inaGen. 29. bles to wait, as *Iacob* for *Lea* ſeven years. Nothing is hard to *love*; it caries all the powers of the ſoule with it.

2. 2. As hee is a God of *hope*, ſo by this grace as an *anchor* faſtned in heaven within the vaile, hee ſtayeth the ſoule; that though as a Ship at Anchor, it may be toſſed and moved, yet not removed from

from its ſtation. This *hope* as corke, will keep the ſoule (though in ſome heavineſſe) from ſinking, and as an *Helmet* beare off the blows that they endanger not our life. Cap. 33. Epheſ. 6.

3. As God is a God of *hope*, ſo by hope of *patience*, which is a grace whereby the ſoule reſigneth up it ſelf to God in humble ſubmiſſion to his will, becauſe he is *our God*, as *David* in extremity *comforted himſelfe in the Lord his God*. Patience breeds comfort, becauſe it brings experience with it of Gods owning of us to be *His*. The ſoule *ſhod* and fenced with *this*, is prepared againſt all rubs and thornes in our way, ſo as wee are kept from taking offence. All troubles we ſuffer, doe but help *patience* to *its perfect worke*, by ſubduing the unbroken ſturdineſſe of our ſpirits, when wee feele by experience, wee get but more blowes, by ſtanding out againſt God, 3. Epheſ. 6. Rom. 5. 3.

4. The Spirit of God (likewiſe) is a ſpirit of *meekneſſe*, whereby though the ſoule be ſenſible of evill, yet it moderates ſuch diſtempers, as would other- 4.

Cap. 33. wiſe rob a man of himſelfe; and together with *patience* keepeth the *ſoule in poſſeſſion* of it ſelfe. It ſtayes murmurings and frettings againſt God or man. It ſets and keeps the ſoule in tune. It is that which God (as hee workes, ſo hee) much *delights in*, and *ſets a price upon* it, as the chiefe ornament of the ſoul. The Zeph. 2.3. *meek of the earth ſeeke God, and are hid in the day of his wrath:* whereas high ſpirits that compaſſe themſelves with *pride* Pſal. 73.6. as with a *chaine*, thinking to ſet out themſelves by *that* which is their *ſhame*, are looked upon by God *a farre off*. Meek perſons will bow, when others break; they are *raiſed* when others are pluckt downe, and ſtand when others that mount upon the wings of vanity *fall*; theſe prevaile by yeelding, and are Lords of themſelves, and other things Mat. 5.5. elſe, more than other unquiet ſpirited men: the bleſſings of *heaven* and *earth* attend on theſe.

5. 5. So likewiſe contentednesſe with our eſtate, is needfull for a waiting condition, and this we have in *Our God* being able to give the ſoule full ſatisfacti-

on

on. For outward things God knowes how to dyet us; If our condition be not to our minde, he will bring our mind to our condition. If the ſpirit be too bigge for the condition, it is never quiet, therefore God will levell both. Thoſe wants be well ſupplyed that are made up with contentedneſſe, and with riches of a higher kinde. If the *Lord* be our *Shepheard*, we can *want nothing*. This lifteth the *weary hands and feeble knees*, even under *chaſtiſement*, wherein though the ſoule mourneth in the ſenſe of Gods diſpleaſure, yet it rejoyceth in his Fatherly care. Cap. 33. Pſal. 23. Heb. 12. 12

6. But *patience* and *contentment* are too low a condition for the ſoul to reſt in, therefore the Spirit of God raiſeth it up to a ſpirituall enlargement of *joy*. So much *joy*, ſo much light; and ſo much *light*, ſo much ſcattering of *darkneſſe of ſpirit*. We ſee in nature how a little light will prevaile over the thickeſt clouds of darkneſſe, a little fire waſtes a great deale of droſſe. The knowledge of God to be *our God*, brings ſuch a light of *joy* into the ſoule, as driveth out dark un- 6.

Cap. 33. comfortable conceits; this light makes lightſome. If the light of *knowledge* alone makes bold, much more the light of *joy* ariſing from our communion and intereſt in God. How can wee enjoy God, and not joy in him? A ſoule truely cheerefull rejoyceth that God whom it loveth, ſhould think it worthy to endure any thing for him. This *joy* often ariſeth to a ſpirit of *glory*, even in matter of outward abaſement; if the trouble accompanied with diſgrace continue, *the ſpirit of Glory reſts upon us*, and it will *reſt* ſo long, untill it make us more than Conquerors, even then when wee ſeeme conquered: for not onely the *cauſe*, but the *ſpirit* riſeth higher, the more the enemies labour to keep it under, as we ſee in *Stephen*.

Acts 7.

With this *joy* goeth a ſpirit of *courage* and *confidence*. What can daunt that ſoule, which in the greateſt troubles hath made the great God to be its owne? Such a ſpirit dares bid defiance to all oppoſite power, ſetting the ſoule above the world, having a ſpirit larger and higher than the world, and ſeeing

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all (but God) beneath it, as being in heaven already in its *head.* After *Moſes* and *Micah* had ſeene God in his favour to them, how little did they regard the angry countenances of thoſe mighty Princes, that were in their times the terrours of the world? The courage of a Chriſtian is not onely againſt ſenſible danger, and of fleſh and bloud, but againſt *principalities, and powers of darkneſſe*, againſt the whole *kingdome* of Sathan, the god of the world, whom hee knowes *ſhortly* ſhall be *trodden under his feet.* Sathan and his may for a time exerciſe us, but they cannot hurt us. True beleevers are ſo many *Kings and Queens*, ſo many Conquerours over that which others are ſlaves to: *they* can overcome themſelves in *revenge*, they can deſpiſe thoſe things that the world admires, and ſee an excellency in *that* which the *world* ſets light by, *they* can ſet upon ſpirituall duties, which the *world* cannot tell how to goe about, and endure that which others tremble to think of, and that upon wiſe reaſons, and a ſound foundation, they can put off themſelves,

Cap. 33.

Rom. 16. 20.

Cap. 33. ſelves, and be content to be nothing, ſo their God may appeare the greater, and dare undertake and undergoe any thing for the glory of their God. This courage of Chriſtians among the *Heathens* was counted *obſtinacy*, but they knew not the power of the Spirit of Chriſt *in his*, which is ever ſtrongeſt, when they are weakeſt in themſelves, *they* knew not the privy armour of proofe that Chriſtians had about their hearts, and thereupon counted their courage to be obſtinacy.

Tertul. in Apologet.

Some think the Martyrs were too prodigall of their bloud, and that they might have beene better adviſed; but ſuch are unacquainted with the force of the love of God kindled in the heart of his childe, which makes him ſet ſuch a high price upon Chriſt and his truth, that he counts not *his life dear unto him*; Hee knowes hee is *not his owne*, but hath given up himſelfe to Chriſt, and therefore all that is *his*, yea if hee had more lives to give for Chriſt, hee ſhould have them. Hee knowes he ſhall be no loſer by it. Hee knowes it is not a loſſe

Act. 20. 24.

losse of his life, but an exchange for a better. Cap. 33.

Wee see the creatures that are under us, wil be couragious in the eye of their Masters, that are of a *superiour* nature above them, and shall not a Christian be couragious in the presence of his great Lord and Master, who is present with him, about him, and in him? undoubtedly hee that hath seene God once in the face of Christ, dares look the grimmest creature in the face, yea death it selfe under any shape. The feare of all things flyes before such a soule. Onely a Christian is not ashamed of his confidence. Why should not a Christian be as bold for his God, as others are for the base gods they make to themselves?

7. Besides a spirit of *courage* (for establishing the soule) is required a spirit of *constancie*, whereby the soule is steeled and preserved immoveable in all conditions, whether present or to come, and is not changed in changes. And why? but because the spirit knows that God on whom it rests is unchange- 7.

Cap. 33. able. Wee our ſelves are as quick-ſilver unſetled and moveable, till the ſpirit of conſtancie fixe us. Wee ſee *David* ſets out God in glorious termes, borrowed from all that is ſtrong in the *creature*, to ſhew that hee had great reaſon to be

Pſal. 18. conſtant, and cleaving to him, *He is my rock, my Buckler, the horn of my ſalvation, my high Tower, &c.* God is a rock ſo *deep*, that no flouds can undermine, ſo *high*, that no waves can reach though they riſe never ſo high, and rage never ſo much. When wee ſtand upon this *rock* that is *higher than wee*, wee may overlooke all waves, ſwelling, and foaming, and breaking themſelves, but not hurting us. And thereupon may triumphantly conclude with the Apoſtle,

Rom. 8. 39 That *neither height, nor depth ſhall ever ſeparate us from the love of God.* Whatſoever is in the creature hee found in his *God*, and more aboundant; the ſoule cannot with an eye of *faith* look upon God in Chriſt, but it will be in its degree as God is *quiet* and *conſtant*, the ſpirit aimeth at ſuch a condition, as it beholdeth in God towards it ſelfe.

This

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This constancy is upheld by endeavouring to keepe a constant sight of God, for want of which it oft fares with us, like men, that having a City or Tower in their eye, passing through uneven grounds, hils and dales, sometimes get the sight thereof, sometimes lose it, and sometimes recover it again, though the *Tower* be still where it was, and they neerer to it than they were at first. So it is oft with our uneven spirits; when once wee have a sight of God, upon any present discouragement, wee let fall our spirits, and lose the sight of him, untill by an eye of *faith* we recover it againe, and see him still to be where he was at first. The cherishing of passions take away the sight of God, as clouds take away the sight of the Sun, though the Sunne be still where it was, and shineth as much as ever it did. We use to say, when the body of the Moon is betwixt the *Sunne* and us, that the Sunne is eclipsed, when indeed not the *Sunne* but the earth is darkned, the Sun loseth not one of its glorious beames. God is oft neere us, as he was unto *Iacob*,

Cap. 34. *cob*, and wee are *not aware of it*. God was neere the holy man *Asaph*, when hee
Psal. 73. 23. thought him far off. *I am continually with thee* (saith he) *thou holdest me by my right hand*. *Mary* in her weeping passion could not see Christ before her, hee seemed a stranger unto her. So long as we can keep our eye upon God, we are above the reach of sin or any spirituall danger.

Cap. XXXIIII.

Of confirming this trust in God. Seeke it of God himselfe. Sins hinder not: nor Satan. Conclusion and Soliloquie.

§. 1.

But to returne to the drawing out of our trust by *waiting*. Our estate in this world is still to wait, and happy it is that we have so great things to wait for; but our comfort is, that wee have
2 Pet. 1. 5. not onely a *furniture of graces*, one strengthning another as stones in an arch, but likewise God vouchsafeth some drops of the sweetnesse of the things

things wee *waite* for, both to encreaſe our deſire of thoſe good things, as likewiſe to enable us more comfortably to *waite* for them. And though we ſhould die waiting, onely cleaving to the promiſe with little or no taſte of the good promiſed; yet this might comfort us, that there is a life to come, that is a life of ſight and ſenſe, and not onely of *taſte* but of *fulneſſe*, and that for *evermore*. Our condition here is to live by faith and not by ſight, onely to make our living by faith more lively, it pleaſeth God when hee ſees fit, to encreaſe our *earneſt* of that we looke for. Even here God waites to *be gracious* to thoſe *that waite for him*. And in heaven Chriſt waytes for us, wee are part of his *fulneſſe*; it is part of his joy that *we ſhall be where he is*, he will not therefore be long without us. The bleſſed Angels and Saints in heaven waite for us. Therefore let us be content as ſtrangers, to waite a while till wee come home, and then wee *ſhall be for ever with the Lord*; there is our eternall reſt, where we ſhall enjoy both our God and our ſelves in perfect

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Pſa. 16. ult.

Eſay 30. 18

Eph. 1. 23. 1. Ioh. 17. 24.

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perfect happineſſe, being as without need, ſo without deſire of the leaſt change. When the time of our departure thither comes, then we may ſay as *David, Enter now my ſoule into thy reſt.* Pſal. 116. Heb. 4. 9. This is the *reſt which remaineth for Gods* people, that is worth the *waiting* for, when we *ſhall reſt from all labour of ſinne and ſorrow*, and *lay our heads in the boſome of Chriſt for ever.* Rev. 14.

It ſtands us therefore upon to get this great Charter more and more confirmed to us (that God is *our God*) for it is of everlaſting uſe unto us. It firſt begins at our entring into *covenant* with God, and continues not only unto *death*, but entreth into heaven with us. As it is our heaven upon earth to enjoy God as ours, ſo it is the very heaven of heaven, that there we ſhall for ever behold him, and have communion with him.

Degrees of our propriety in God. Pro. 4. 18.

The degrees of manifeſting this propriety in God are divers, riſing one upon another, *as the light cleares up by little and little till it comes to a perfect day.* 1. As the ground of all the reſt, wee apprehend

hend God to be a God of ſome peculiar perſons, as *favourites* above others. 2. From hence is ſtirred up in the ſoule a reſtleſſe deſire, that God would diſcover himſelfe ſo to it, as hee doth to thoſe that are *his*, that hee would *viſit our ſoules* with the ſalvation *of his choſen*. 3. Hence followes a putting of the ſoule upon God, an adventuring it ſelfe on his mercy. 4. Upon this, God when he ſeeth fit, diſcovers by his ſpirit that hee is *Ours*. 5. Whence followeth a dependance on him as ours, for all things that may carry us on in the way to heaven. 6. Courage and boldneſſe in ſetting our ſelves againſt whatſoever may oppoſe us in the way, As the three young men in *Daniel*, *Our God can deliver us if he will. Our God is in heaven, &c.* 7. After which ſprings a ſweet ſpirituall ſecurity, whereby the ſoule is freed from ſlaviſh feares, and glorieth in God as *Ours* in all conditions. And this is termed by the *Apoſtle*, not onely *aſſurance*, but the *riches of aſſurance*. Yet this is not ſo cleare, and full as it ſhall be in heaven, becauſe ſome clouds may after

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2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Dan. 3. So Pſa. 115. 3.

7.

Col. 2. 2.

Cap. 34. after ariſe out of the remainder of corruption, which may ſomething overcaſt this *aſſurance*, untill the light of Gods countenance in heaven for ever ſcatters all.

There being ſo great happineſſe in this neereneſſe betwixt God and us, no wonder if Sathan labour to hinder the ſame, by interpoſing the guilt and hainouſneſſe of our *ſinnes*, which he knows of themſelves will worke *a ſeparation*: But *theſe* upon our firſt ſerious thought of *returning*, will be removed. As they could not hinder our meeting with God, ſo they may cauſe a ſtrangeneſſe for a time, but not a parting; a hiding of Gods countenance, but not a baniſhing of us from it. *Peter* had *denied* Chriſt, and the reſt of the Apoſtles had left him all *alone*: Yet our Saviour after his *Reſurrection* forgets all former unkindneſſes, hee did not ſo much as object it to them, but ſends *Mary*, who her ſelfe had been a great ſinner, as an Apoſtle to the *Apoſtles*, and that *preſently*, to tell them that he was *riſen*, his care would have no delay. Hee knew they

Iohn 20.

were

were in great heavineſſe for their unkindneſſe. Though he was now entred into the *firſt degree* of his glory, yet wee ſee his *glory* made him not forget his poore Diſciples. Above all he was moſt carefull of *Peter*, as deeper in ſinne than the reſt, and therefore deeper in ſorow. *Goe tell Peter*, he needs *moſt* comfort. But what is the meſſage? that *I aſcend* not *to my Father* alone, but *to your Father*, not to *my God* onely, but to *your God*. Cap. 34.

And ſhall not wee be bold to ſay ſo after Chriſt hath taught us, and put this claime into our mouthes? If once wee let this hold goe, then Sathan hath us where he would, every little croſſe then dejects us. Sathan may darken the *joy* of our ſalvation, but not take away the God of our ſalvation. *David* after his crying ſinne of murther, prayes, *Reſtore unto mee the joy of thy ſalvation*, this hee had loſt; but yet in the ſame *Pſalme* hee prayes, *Deliver mee from blood O God, thou God of my ſalvation*; therefore whatſoever *ſenſe*, *reaſon*, *temptation*, *the law*, or *guilt upon conſcience* ſhall ſay, Nay however God himſelfe, by his ſtrange Pſal. 51.

Cap. 34. strange carriage to us may seeme to be, yet let us cast our selves upon him, and not suffer this *plea* to be wrung from us, but shut our eyes to all, and look upon God *All-gracious* and *All-sufficient*, who is the *Father*, the begetter of *comfort*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. *the God* the Creator *of consolation*, not onely of things that may *comfort*, but of the comfort it self conveied through Mic. 7. 18. these unto us. *Who is a God like unto our God, that passeth by the sinnes of the remnant of his people.* This should not bee thought on without admiration, and indeed there is nothing so much deserves our wonderment as such mercy, of such a God, to such as we.

Since God hath *avouched us to be his* Deu. 26. 18 *peculiar people*, let us avouch *him*; and since he hath past his word for *us*, let us passe our words for him that we will be *his*, and stand for him, and to our power advance his cause. Thus *David* out of an enlarged spirit saith, *Thou art my* Psl. 119. 28 *God, and I will praise thee*, thou art MY *God, and I will exalt thee*. Whatsoever wee engage for God, wee are sure to be gainers by. The true Christian is the

the wiſeſt Merchant, and makes the beſt adventure. Hee may ſtay long, but is ſure of a ſafe and a rich returne. A godly man is moſt wiſe for himſelfe. Wee enter on Religion, upon theſe tearms, to part with our ſelves, and all, when God ſhall call for it. Cap. 34.

§. 2.

God much rejoyceth in ſinners converted, as monuments of his mercy, and becauſe the remembrance of their former ſins, whets them on to be more earneſt in his ſervice, eſpecially after they have felt the ſenſe of Gods love, they even burn with a holy deſire of honouring him, whom before they diſhonoured, and ſtand not upon doing or ſuffering any thing for him, but cheerfully embrace all occaſions of expreſſing obedience. God hath more work from them than from others; why then ſhould any be diſcouraged?

Ex ipſo dolore ſuo cõpuncti, inardeſcunt in amore Dei. Damna præcedentia lucris ſequentibus compenſant. Greg.

Neither is it ſinnes after our converſion, that nullifie this claime of God to be *Ours*. For this is the grand diffe-

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Heb. 10. 22

rence betwixt the *two* covenants, that *now* God will bee mercifull to our sins, *if our hearts by faith be sprinkled with the blood of Christ*. Though *one* sinne was enough to bring condemnation, yet the free gift of grace in Christ, is of *many* offences unto justification. And we have a sure ground for this; for the *righteousnesse* of Christ is *Gods* righteousnesse, and God will thus glorifie it, that it shall stand good to those that by faith apply it against their daily sinnes, even till at once we cease both to *live*, and *sin*. For this very end was the Son of God willingly *made sin*, that we might be freed from the same. And if all our sins laid upon Christ could not take away Gods love from him, shall they take away Gods love from us, when by Christs blood our souls are purged from them?

O mercy of all mercies, that when we were once his, and gave away our selves for nothing, and so became neither his, nor our owne, that then hee would vouchsafe to become ours, and make us *his* by such a way, as all the Angels in heaven stand wondring at, even

even his Sonnes not onely taking our *nature* and miſerable condition, but our *ſinne* upon him, that that being done away, wee might through Chriſt have boldneſſe with God as *ours*, who is now in heaven appearing there for us, untill he brings us home to himſelfe, and preſents us to his Father for *his* for ever. Cap. 34.

Thinke not then onely that wee are Gods and he *Ours*, but from what love and by what glorious meanes this was brought to paſſe; What can poſſibly diſable this claime, when God for this end hath founded a covenant of peace ſo ſtrongly in Chriſt, that ſinne it ſelfe cannot diſanull it? Chriſt was *therefore manifeſt, that he might deſtroy* this greateſt *worke of the devill.* Forgiveneſſe of ſins *now* is one chiefe part of our portion in God. It is good therefore not to pore and plod ſo much upon ſinne and vileneſſe by it, as to forget that mercy that rejoyceth over *judgement.* If wee once be Gods, though wee *drinke this deadly poyſon*, it *ſhall not hurt us.* God will make a medicine, an antidote of it; and for all other evils the fruit of them is 1 Ioh. 3. 5, 8

Mar. 16. 18.

Cap. 34. by Gods ſanctifying the ſame, the *taking away ſinne* out of our natures; ſo that leſſer evils are ſent to take away the greater. If God could not over-rule evils to his owne ends, he would never ſuffer them.

§. 3.

I have ſtood the longer upon this, becauſe it is the one *thing needfull*, the one thing wee ſhould deſire, that this one God, in whom, and from whom is all good, ſhould be ours. All promiſes of all good in the new covenant, ſpring
Ier 32. firſt from this, that God *will be ours, and we ſhall be his*. What can we have more? and what is in the world leſſe that will content us long, or ſtand us in any ſtead, eſpecially at that time when all muſt be taken from us? Let us put up all our deſires for all things we ſtand in need of, in this right wee have to God in Chriſt, who hath brought God and us together; hee can deny us nothing, that hath not denied us himſelfe. If he be moved from hence to doe us good,

that

that wee are *his*, Let us be moved to fetch all good from him, on the ſame right that he is *ours*. Cap. 34.

The perſwaſion of this will free us from all puſillanimity, lowlineſſe, and narrowneſſe of ſpirit, when wee ſhall think that nothing can hurt us, but it muſt break through God firſt. If God *give quietneſſe*, who ſhall *make trouble?* Iob 34.29. If God be with us, who can be againſt us? This is that which puts comfort into all other comforts, that maketh any burthen light: This is alwayes ready for all purpoſes: Our God is a preſent, and a ſeaſonable help. All evills are at his command to be gone, and all comforts at his command to come. It is but goe *comfort*, goe *peace* to ſuch a mans heart, cheere him, raiſe him; Goe *ſalvation*, reſcue ſuch and ſuch a ſoule in diſtreſſe. So ſaid and ſo done preſently. Nay, with reverence be it ſpoken, ſo farre doth God paſſe over himſelfe unto us, that he is content himſelfe to be commanded by us. *Concerning the worke of my hands command you mee:* lay the care and charge of that upon mee. Iſay 45.11

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He is content to be out-wraſtled, and over-powred by a ſpirit of *faith*, as in *Iacob*, and *the woman of Canaan*, to be as it were at our ſervice. He would not have us want any thing wherein hee is able to help us. And what is there wherein God cannot help us? If Chriſtians knew the power they have in heaven and earth, what were able to ſtand againſt them? What wonder is it if *faith* overcome the world, if it overcomes him that made the world? that faith ſhould bee Almighty, that hath the Almighty himſelfe ready to uſe all his power for the good of them to whom hee hath given the power of himſelfe unto? Having therefore ſuch a *living fountaine* to draw from, ſuch a *center* to reſt in, having all in *one*, and that one *Ours*, why ſhould wee knock at any other doore? we may goe boldly to God *now*, as made *ours*, *being bone of our bone, and fleſh of our fleſh.* Wee may goe more comfortably to God, than to any *Angell* or *Saint*. God in the ſecond perſon hath vouchſafed to take *our nature* upon him, but not that of *Angells*. Our

Tutius & iucundius loquor ad meum Jeſum quam ad aliquem ſanctorum Dei, &c. Quod ego ſum, ſicut dignatus eſt Deus, non

Our *God*, and our *Man*, our God-man is ascended into the high court of heaven to his and our God, cloathed with our nature. Is there any more able and willing to plead our cause, or to whom we may trust businesses with than hee, who is in *heaven for all things for us, appertaining to God.*

Cap. 34. *factus est quod angeli. Ad curiam Dei sui, Dei tui, præcessit Deus tuus homo tuus, tunica tua indutus illic assiduè pro nobis interpellat.* Aug. Heb. 5. 1.

It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian, upon knowledge of what he stands in need of, to know where to supply all. It should raise up a holy shame and indignation in us, that there should be so much in God, who is so neere unto us in Christ, and wee make so little use of him. What good can any thing doe us if we use it not? God is ours to use, and yet men will rather use shifts and unhallowed pollicies, then be beholding to *God*, who thinkes himselfe never more honoured by us, than when we make use of him. If wee beleeve any thing will doe us good, wee naturally make out for the obtaining of it. If we beleeve any thing will hurt us, we study to decline it. And certaine it is, if wee beleeved that so much good

Cap. 34. were in God, we would then apply our ſelves to him, and him to our ſelves; whatſoever vertue is in any thing, it is conveyed by application and touching of it; that whereby we touch God, is our *faith*, which never toucheth him, but it drawes vertue from him; upon the firſt touch of faith, ſpirituall life is begun. Its a baſtard in *nature*, to beleeve any thing can worke upon another without ſpirituall or bodily touch. And it is a Monſter in *Religion*, to beleeve that any ſaving good will iſſue from God, if wee turne from him, and ſhut him our, and our hearts be unwilling. Where unbeleefe is, it bindes up his power. Where *faith* is, there it is between the ſoule and God, (as betwixt the iron and the Loadſtone) a preſent cloſing and drawing of one to the other. This is the beginning of *eternall life*, ſo to *know God the Father, and his Son Chriſt*, as thereby to embrace him with the armes of *faith* and *love*, as *Ours*, by the beſt title hee can make us, who is truth it ſelfe.

Iohn 17. 4.

Since then our happineſſe lies (out of

of our *ſelves*) in *God*, we ſhould goe out of our ſelves for it, and firſt get into Chriſt, and ſo unto God in him; and then labour by the Spirit of the Father and the Sonne, to maintaine acquaintance with both, that ſo God may be *Ours*, not onely in *covenant*, but in *Communion*, hearkning what he will ſay to us, and opening our ſpirits, diſcloſing our wants, conſulting and adviſing in all our diſtreſſes with him. By keeping this acquaintance with God, *peace, and all good is conveyed to us.* Cap. 34. Iob 22.21

Thereafter as we maintain this communion further with him, wee out of love ſtudy to pleaſe him, by exact walking according to his commands; then we ſhall feele encreaſe of peace as our care encreaſeth, then hee will *come and ſup with us*, and be free in his refreſhing of us. Then he *will ſhew* himſelfe more and more to us, and *manifeſt ſtill* a further degree of preſence in joy and ſtrength, untill communion in grace, ends in communion in glory.

But wee muſt remember (as *David* doth here) to deſire and delight in God *himſelfe*,

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himselfe, more than in any thing that is Gods; It was a signe of S. *Pauls* pure love to the Corinthians, when he said, *I seeke not yours, but you.* We should seeke for no blessing of God so much as for himselfe.

What is there in the world of equall goodnes to draw us away from our *God?* If to preserve the dearest thing we have in the world, we break with God, God will take away the comfort we look to have by it, and it will prove but a dead contentment, if not a torment to us. Whereas if wee care to preserve communion with God, wee shall be sure to finde *in* him whatsoever wee deny *for* him, *honor, riches, pleasures, friends, all*; so much the sweeter, by how much wee have them more immediately from the spring head. We shall never finde God to be our God more, then when for making of him to be so, we suffer any thing for his sake. We enjoy never more of him than then.

At the *first* we may seeke to him, as rich to supply our wants, as a Physitian to cure our soules and bodies, but here we

wee muſt not reſt till wee come to rejoyce in him as our friend, and from thence riſe to an admiration of him for his owne excellencies, that being ſo high in himſelfe, out of his goodneſſe would ſtoop low to us. And we ſhould delight in the meditation of him, not onely as good to us, but as good in himſelfe; becauſe goodnes of bounty ſprings from goodneſſe of diſpoſition, *he doth good becauſe he is good.* Cap. 34.

A naturall man delights more in Gods gifts, than in his grace. If he deſires *grace*, it is to grace himſelfe, not *as* grace, making him like unto God, and iſſuing from the firſt grace the free favour of God; by which meanes men come to have the gifts of God without God himſelfe. But alas, what are all other goods without the chiefe good? they are but as flowers, which are *long* in planting, in cheriſhing and growing, but *ſhort* in enjoying the ſweetneſſe of them. *David* here joyes in God himſelfe, he cares for nothing in the world, but what he may have with his favour, and what ever elſe hee deſires, hee deſires *Dona Deiſſe Deo.*

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sires onely that he may have the better ground from thence to praise his God.

§. 4.

The summe of all is this, *The state of Gods deare children in this world, is to be cast into variety of conditions*, wherein they consisting of nature, flesh, and spirit, every principle hath its owne and proper working. They are sensible as *flesh and bloud*, they are sensible to discouragements as *sinfull* flesh and bloud; but they recover themselves as having a higher principle *(Gods Spirit)* above flesh and blood in them.

In this conflicting state, every principle labouring to maintaine it selfe, at length by helpe of the Spirit, backing and strengthening his owne worke, *grace* gets the better, keeping nature within bounds, and suppressing corruption. And this the soule (so farre as it is spirituall) doth by gathering it selfe to it selfe, and by reasoning the case so farre, till it concludes, and joynes upon this issue, that the onely way to attaine

taine ſound peace, is (when all other meanes faile) to *truſt in God*. And thereupon hee layes a charge upon his ſoule ſo to doe, it being a courſe grounded upon the higheſt reaſon, even the unchangeable goodneſſe of God, who out of the riches of his mercy, having choſen a people in this world, which ſhould be to the glory of his mercy, will give them matter of ſetting forth his *praiſe*, in ſhewing ſome token of *good* upon them, as being thoſe on whom hee hath fixed his love, and to whom hee will appeare not onely a *Saviour*, but *ſalvation* it ſelfe. *Nothing but ſalvation*; as the Sunne is nothing but light, ſo whatſoever proceeds from him to them, tends to further ſalvation. All his wayes towards them leade to that; which wayes of his, though for a time they are ſecret, and not eaſily found out, yet at length God will be wonderfull in them, to the admiration of his enemies themſelves, who ſhall be forced to ſay, God hath done great things for them; and all from this ground, that God is *our God* in Cap. 34.

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in covenant. Which words are a ſtearne that rule and guide the whole text.

For why ſhould we not be *diſquieted* when we are diſquieted? Why ſhould we not be *caſt downe* when wee are caſt downe? Why ſhould wee *truſt* in God as a Saviour? but that he is [*our God,*] making himſelfe ſo to us in his choiſeſt favours: doing that for us, which none elſe can doe, and which hee doth to none elſe that are not his in a gracious manner. This bleſſed intereſt and intercourſe betwixt Gods Spirit and our ſpirits, is the hindge upon which all turns: without this, no comfort is comfortable; with this, no trouble can be very troubleſome.

Without this aſſurance there is little comfort in Soliloquies; unleſſe, when we ſpeak to our ſelves, we can ſpeak to God as *ours.* For in deſperate caſes, our ſoule can ſay nothing to it ſelfe, to ſtill it ſelfe, unleſſe it be ſuggeſted by God; Diſcouragements will appeare greater to the ſoule than any comfort, unleſſe God comes in as ours.

See therefore *Davids art*, hee demands

mands of himſelfe why hee was ſo caſt downe? The cauſe was apparant, becauſe there were troubles *without*, and terrours *within*, and none to comfort. Well, grant this ſaith the Spirit of God in him, (as the worſt muſt be granted) yet ſaith the Spirit, *Truſt in God.* Cap. 34. Soliloquie.

So I have.

Why then, waite in truſting? *Light is ſowne for the righteous*, it comes not up on the ſudden, wee muſt not think to ſowe and reap both at once. If trouble be lengthened, lengthen thy patience.

What good will come of this?

God will wait to doe thee that good, for which *thou ſhalt praiſe him*; hee will deale ſo graciouſly with thee, as he will deſerve thy praiſe, hee will *ſhew thee* his *ſalvation.* And new favours will ſtirre thee up to ſing new ſongs: every new recovery of our ſelves or friends, is as it were a new life, and miniſters new matter of praiſe. And upon offering this *ſacrifice of praiſe*, the heart is further enlarged to pray for freſh bleſſings. Wee are never fitter to *pray*, than after *praiſe.*

But

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in covenant. Which words are a ſtearne that rule and guide the whole text.

For why ſhould we not be *diſquieted* when we are diſquieted? Why ſhould we not be *caſt downe* when wee are caſt downe? Why ſhould wee *truſt* in God as a Saviour? but that he is [*our God,*] making himſelfe ſo to us in his choiſeſt favours: doing that for us, which none elſe can doe, and which hee doth to none elſe that are not his in a gracious manner. This bleſſed intereſt and intercourſe betwixt Gods Spirit and our ſpirits, is the hindge upon which all turns: without this, no comfort is comfortable; with this, no trouble can be very troubleſome.

Without this aſſurance there is little comfort in Soliloquies; unleſſe, when we ſpeak to our ſelves, we can ſpeak to God as *ours.* For in deſperate caſes, our ſoule can ſay nothing to it ſelfe, to ſtill it ſelfe, unleſſe it be ſuggeſted by God; Diſcouragements will appeare greater to the ſoule than any comfort, unleſſe God comes in as ours.

See therefore *Davids art*, hee demands

mands of himselfe why hee was so cast downe? The cause was apparant, because there were troubles *without*, and terrours *within*, and none to comfort. Well, grant this saith the Spirit of God in him, (as the worst must be granted) yet saith the Spirit, *Trust in God.* Cap. 34. *Soliloquie.*

So I have.

Why then, waite in trusting? *Light is sowne for the righteous*, it comes not up on the sudden, wee must not think to sowe and reap both at once. If trouble be lengthened, lengthen thy patience.

What good will come of this?

God will wait to doe thee that good, for which *thou shalt praise him*; hee will deale so graciously with thee, as he will deserve thy praise, hee will *shew thee* his *salvation.* And new favours will stirre thee up to sing new songs: every new recovery of our selves or friends, is as it were a new life, and ministers new matter of praise. And upon offering this *sacrifice of praise*, the heart is further enlarged to pray for fresh blessings. Wee are never fitter to *pray*, than after *praise.*

But

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But in the meane time I hang downe my head, whileſt mine enemies carie themſelves highly, and my friends ſtand aloofe.

God in his owne time (which is beſt for thee) will be the *ſalvation of thy countenance*, he will compaſſe thee about with ſongs of deliverance, and make it appeare at laſt, that hee hath care of thee.

But why then doth God appeare as a ſtranger to me?

That thou ſhouldſt follow after him with the ſtronger *faith* and *prayer*; hee withdrawes himſelf, that thou ſhouldſt bee the more earneſt in ſeeking after him. God ſpeakes the ſweeteſt comfort to the heart in the *wilderneſſe*. Happily thou art not yet low enough, nor purged enough. Thy affections are not throughly crucified to the world, and therefore it will not yet appeare that it is Gods good will to deliver thee. Wert thou a fit ſubject of mercy, God would beſtow it on thee.

But what ground haſt thou to build thy ſelfe ſo ſtrongly upon God?

He hath offered, and made himſelfe to

to be [*My God,*] and ſo hath ſhewed himſelfe in former times; And I have made him *My God,* by yeelding him his Soveraignty in my heart. Beſides the preſent evidence of his bleſſed Spirit, clearing the ſame, and many peculiar tokens of his love, which I daily doe enjoy; though ſometimes the beams of his favour are eclipſed. Thoſe that are *Gods,* beſides their intereſt and right in him, have oft a ſenſe of the ſame even in this life, as a fore-taſte of that which is to come. To the ſeale of *grace* ſtamped upon their hearts, God ſuper-adds a freſh ſeale of *joy* and *comfort,* by the preſence and witneſſe of his *Spirit.* And ſhewes likewiſe ſome outward token for good upon them, whereby he makes it appeare, that *he hath ſet apart him that is godly for himſelfe, as his owne.* Cap. 34. Pſal. 4. 3.

Thus wee ſee that diſcuſſing of objections in the conſiſtory of the ſoule, ſettles the ſoule at laſt. *Faith* at length ſilencing all riſings to the contrary. All motion tends to reſt, and ends in it; God is the center and reſting place of

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the soule, and here *David* takes up his rest, and so let us. Then whatsoever times come, wee are sure of a hiding place and Sanctuary.

FINIS.

HAB. 3. 17.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall faile, and the fields shall yeeld no meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

PSAL. 91. 1, 2.

Hee that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall lodge under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortresse; My God, in him will I trust.

PSAL. 73. 26.

My strength and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

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FINIS.

THE SOVLES CONFLICT with it selfe, AND VICTORY over it selfe by *Faith*.

A Treatise of the inward disquietments of distressed spirits, with comfortable remedies to establish them.

Return unto thy rest O my soule, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

By *R. Sibbs* D. D. Master of *Katherine Hall* in Cambridge, and Preacher of Gray's Inne London.

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Cap. 28. Mic. 7. 8.

of a *ſpring*, naturall, ready, free, as Gods love to us is; *mercy* pleaſes him, ſo ſhould *praiſes* pleaſe us; It is our happineſſe when the beſt part in us, is exerciſed about the beſt and higheſt worke; it was a good ſpeech of him that ſaid, If God had made me a *Nightingale*, I would have ſung as a *Nightingale*, but now God hath made mee a man, I will ſing forth the *praiſes of God*, which is the worke of a Saint onely; *All*

Pſ. 145. 10.

thy workes bleſſe thee, and thy Saints praiſe thee; All things are either bleſſings in their nature, or ſo bleſſed, as they are made bleſſiings to us by the over-ruling comming of *him*, who maketh all things ſerviceable to *his*, even the worſt things in this ſenſe are made ſpirituall to Gods people againſt their owne nature; how great is that goodneſſe which makes even the worſt things good?

The leaſt mercy to be prized.

Little favours come from no ſmall love, but even from the ſame love that God intends the greateſt things to us, and are pledges of it; the godly are more thankfull for the leaſt favours, than wordly men for the greateſt; the affection

affection of the giver inhaunces the gift. Cap. 28.

O then let us labour to improve, both what we have, and what wee are to his glory: It discovers that we *love* God, (not onely with all our *understanding*, *heart*, and *affections*, but) when with all our *might* and *power*, so farre as we have advantage by any *part*, *relation*, or *calling* whatsoever we endeavour to doe him service, wee cannot have a greater honour in the world, than to be honoured of God, to be abundant in this kinde.

Our time here is short, and we shall all ere long be called to a reckoning, therefore let us study *reall* praises. Gods blessing of us is in *deed*, and so should ours bee of him. Thankes in *words* is good, but in *deeds* is better; *leaves* are good, but *fruit* is better; and of fruit, that which *costs* us most. True *praise* requires our whole man, the *judgement* to esteeme, the *memory* to treasure up, the *will* to resolve, the affections to delight, the *tongue* to speake of, and the life to expresse the rich favours of God: what

Our praise should be reall.

Cap. 28. what can we thinke of? what can wee call to minde? what can we reſolve upon? what can wee ſpeake? what can we expreſſe in our whole courſe, better than the *praiſes* of him, *of whom, and through whom, and to whom* we and *all things are?*

Rō 11. 36.

Our whole life ſhould ſpeake nothing but thankfulneſſe; every condition and place we are in, ſhould be a witneſſe of our thankfulneſſe; this will make the times and places wee live in, the better for us; when wee our ſelves are monuments of Gods mercy, it is fit wee ſhould be patternes of his praiſes, and leave monuments to others; Wee ſhould thinke life is given us, to doe ſomething better than life in; we live not to live; our life is not the end of it ſelfe, but the praiſe of the giver; God hath joyned his glory and our happineſſe together; it is fit that wee ſhould referre all that is good to his glory, that hath joyned his glory to our beſt good, in being glorified in our ſalvation.

David concludes, that he *ſhould certainly*

tainly praiſe God, becauſe he had *prayed* unto him. Prayers be the ſeeds of praiſes, I have ſowne, therefore I will reap; what we receive as a fruit of our prayers, is more ſweet than what wee have by a generall providence. Cap. 28.

But how doe wee know that God heares our prayers? *Object.*

1. If we regard them our ſelves, and expect an iſſue; prayer is a ſure adventure, we may well look for a returne. *Anſw.* 1.

2. It is a ſigne God hath heard our prayers, when hee ſtirres up thankfulneſſe aforehand upon aſſurance; thankfulneſſe cannot be without either the grace of God, by which wee are thankfull, or ſome taſte of the things we are thankfull for. God often accepts the prayer, when hee doth not grant the thing, and will give us thereby occaſion of thankſgiving for his wiſe care, in changing one bleſſing for another fitter for us. God regards my prayers, when by prayer my heart is wrought to that frame which hee requires, that is, an humble ſubjection to him, from an acknowledgement of my wants, and his fulneſſe. 2.

Cap. 28. fulneſſe. There is nothing ſtirred up in our hearts by the Spirit, no, not ſo much as a gracious deſire, but God will anſwer it, if we have a ſpirit to waite.

3. 3. We may know God hath accepted our prayer, when he makes the way eaſie & plain after prayer by a gracious providence; when the courſe of things begin to change, and wee meete with comforts in ſtead of former croſſes, and find our hearts quieted and encouraged againſt what we moſt feared.

4. 4. Likewiſe earneſtneſſe in prayer is a ſigne God heares our prayers, as fire kindled from heaven ſheweth God accepts the ſacrifice; the ground of prevailing by our prayer, is, that they are put up in a gracious name, and for perſons in favour, and dictated by Gods owne Spirit; they work in the ſtrength of the bleſſed Trinity, not their owne, giving God the glory of all his excellencies.

Pſal. 50, 15. It is Gods direction *to call upon him in trouble*, & it is his promiſe *to deliver*; and then both his *direction* and *promiſe* that we ſhall *glorifie him*; When troubles

bles ſtirre up *prayer*, Gods anſwer to them will ſtirre up *praiſes*. *David* when hee ſaith, *I ſhall praiſe God*, preſuppoſes God would deliver him, that he might have ground of praiſing his Name. And hee knew God would deliver him, becauſe as from faith he had prayed for deliverance, ſo hee knew it was the order of Gods dealing, to revive after drooping, and refreſh after fainting. God knowes otherwiſe that our ſpirits would faile before him. Cap. 28.

A thankfull diſpoſition, is a ſpeciall help in an afflicted condition, for *thankfulneſſe* ſprings from *love*, and love *rejoyceth in ſuffering*. Thankfulneſſe raiſes the ſoule higher than it ſelfe, it is trading with God, whereby as *we* by him, ſo *he* gaines by us. Therefore the Saints uſed this as a motive to God, that hee would grant their deſires, becauſe *the living praiſe him*, and not *the dead*. If God expect praiſe from us, ſure he will put us into a condition of praiſe. Acts 15.21 Iſay 38.19.

Unthankfulneſſe is a ſinne deteſtable both to God and men, and the leſſe puniſhment it receives from humane lawes,

Cap. 28. lawes, the more it is punished *inwardly* by secret shame, and *outwardly* by publique hatred, if once it prove notorious. When Gods arrests come forth for denying him his tribute, he chiefly eyes an unthankfull heart, and hates all sin the worse, as there is more unthankfulnesse in it: the neglect of kindnesse is taken most unkindly. Why should wee load God with injuries, that loadeth us with his blessings? who would requite good with evill? Such mens mercies will prove at last so many indictments against them.

Vse. I beseech you therefore labour to be men of praises. If in any duty wee may expect assistance, wee may in this, that altogether concernes Gods glory: the more we praise God, the more wee shall praise him. When God by grace enlarges the *will*, he intends to give the *deede*. Gods children wherein their wils are conformable to Gods will, are sure to have them fulfilled. In a fruitfull ground, a man will sow his best seed. God intends his owne glory in every mercy, and he that *praises him, glorifies him.*

Psal. 50. 23

him. When our wills therefore carry us to that which God wills above all, wee may well expect he will ſatisfie our deſires. The living God is a living fountaine never drawne dry, he hath never done ſo much for us, but hee can and will doe more. If there be no end of our praiſes, there ſhall be no end of his goodneſſe: no way of thriving like to this. By this meanes we are ſure never to be very miſerable; how can hee be dejected, that by a ſweet communion with God ſets himſelfe in heaven? nay maketh his heart a kinde of heaven, *A Temple*, a *holy of holies*, wherein *Incenſe* is offered unto God. It is the ſweeteſt branch of our Prieſtly office, to offer up theſe daily ſacrifices; It is not onely the beginning, but a further entrance of our heaven upon earth, and ſhall bee one day our whole imployment for ever. Cap. 28. 2 Cor. 6.16

Praiſe is a juſt and due tribute for all Gods bleſſings; for what elſe eſpecially doe the beſt favours of God call for at our hands? How doe all creatures praiſe God, but by *our* mouths? It is a Praiſe is a juſt and due debt.

Cap. 28.

a debt alwayes owing, and alwayes paying; and the more wee pay, the more wee ſhall owe; upon the due diſcharge of this debt, the ſoule will finde much peace. A thankfull heart to God for his bleſſings, is the greateſt bleſſing of all. Were it not for a few gracious ſoules, what honour ſhould God have of the reſt of the unthankfull world? which ſhould ſtirre us up the more to be trumpets of Gods praiſes in the midſt of his enemies, becauſe this (in ſome ſort) hath a prerogative above our praiſing God in heaven; for there God hath no enemies to diſhonour him.

Praiſing of God, A duty without exception.

This is a *duty* that none can except againſt, becauſe it is eſpecially a worke of the *heart*. All cannot ſhew their thankfulneſſe in *giving*, or *doing* great matters, but all may expreſſe the willingneſſe of their hearts. *All within us* may *praiſe his holy Name*, though wee have little or nothing *without us*; and that within us is the thing God chiefly requires. Our heart is the *Altar* on which wee offer this *Incenſe*; God lookes

Pſal. 103.

looks not to quantity, but to proportion; he accepts a *mite* where there is no more to be had. Cap. 28.

But how shall we be enabled to this great duty? Quest.

Enter into a deep consideration of Gods favours, past, present, and to come; think of the *greatnesse* and *suteableneſſe* of them to our condition, the seasonableneſſe and necessity of them every way unto us. Consider how miserable our life were without them, even without common favours; but as for spirituall favours, that make both our naturall and civill condition comfortable, our very life were death, our light were darkneſſe without these. In all favours thinke not of them so much, as Gods mercy and love in Christ which sweetens them. Thinke of the freeneſſe of this love, and the smallneſſe of thy own deserts. How many blessings doth God bestow upon us, above our deserts, yea, above our desires, nay, above our very thoughts? Hee had thoughts of love to us, when wee had no thoughts of our selves. What had we been if God had

Answ. How we may attaine to praise God in some acceptable manner.

1. A deepe consideration of favours.

Cap. 28.

not beene good untous? How many blessings hath God bestowed upon us, that we never prayed for? and yet wee are not so ready to *praise God*, as to pray unto him; this more desire of what wee want, than esteeming of what we have, shews too much prevailing of *self-love*. But

2. By comparing our selves with others.

Secondly, comparing also our selves with others, will adde a great lustre to Gods favour, considering wee are all hewed out of one Rock, and differ nothing from the meanest, but in Gods free love. Who are we that God should single us out for the glory of his rich mercy?

3. That Gods blessings to us are, as if we onely were cared for.

Considering likewise, *that the blessings of God to us, are such as if none but wee had them, and God cares for us, as if he had none else to care for in the world besides.* These things well pondered, should set the greater price upon Gods blessings; what are we in nature and grace, but Gods blessings? What is in us, about us, above us? What see we, taste wee, enjoy wee, but blessings; All we have or hope to have, are but dead favours

to

to us, unleſſe we put life into them by a ſpirit of thankfulneſſe. And ſhall wee be as dead as the earth, as the ſtones wee tread on? Shall we live as if wee were reſolved God ſhould have no praiſe by us? Shall wee make our ſelves God, aſcribing all to our ſelves? Nay, ſhall wee (as many doe) fight againſt God with his owne favours, and turne Gods bleſſings againſt himſelfe? Shall wee abuſe peace to ſecurity? Plenty to eaſe, promiſes to preſumption, gifts to pride? How can wee pleaſe the devill better than thus doing? Oh! the wonderfull patience of God, to continue life to thoſe whoſe life is nothing elſe, but a warring againſt him the giver of life. Cap. 28.

As God hath thoughts of love to us, ſo ſhould our thoughts be of praiſes to him, and of doing good in our places to others for his ſake. Think with thy ſelfe, Is there any I may honour God by releeving, comforting, counſelling? Is there any of *Ionathans race?* Is there any of Chriſts deare ones? I will doe good to them, that they together with 2 Sam 9. 1 Pſal. 118. 1

Cap. 28.

mee, and for mee may praiſe God. As *David* here checks himſelfe for the failing and diſquietneſſe of his Spirit, and as a cure thereof, thinkes of praiſing God. So let us (in the like caſe) ſtirre up our ſouls as he did, and ſay, *Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoule, and all that is within me ſet forth his holy Name.* Wee never uſe our ſpirits to better purpoſe, then when by that light wee have from God, wee ſtirre them up to looke back againe to him.

Pſal. 103. 1.

The excellent uſe of Thankſgiving.

By this it will appeare to what good purpoſes wee had a being here in the world, and were brought into communion with Chriſt by the Goſpell. The carriage of all things to the right end, ſhewes, whoſe we are, and whither we tend. It abundantly appeares by Gods revealing of himſelfe many wayes to us, as by *Promiſes*, *Sacraments*, *Sabbaths*, &c. that hee intended to raiſe up our hearts to this heavenly duty. The whole gracious diſpenſation of God in Chriſt tends to this, that our carriage ſhould be nothing elſe, but an expreſſion of Thankfulneſſe to him; that by a free

free, cheerefull and gracious diſpoſition, we might ſhew wee are the people of Gods free grace, ſet at liberty from the ſpirit of bondage, *to ſerve him without feare*, with a voluntary child-like ſervice, *all the dayes of our lives.* Cap. 29. Luk. 1. 74.

CAP. XXIX.

Of Gods manifold ſalvation for his people. And why open, or expreſſed in the countenance.

I Proceed.

[*Hee is the ſalvation of my countenance.*]

As *David* ſtrengthens his truſt in God, by reaſon fetcht from the future goodneſſe of God apprehended by faith, ſo hee ſtrengthens that reaſon with another reaſon fetcht from God, whom he apprehends here as *the ſalvation of his countenance.* Wee need reaſon againſt reaſon, and reaſon upon reaſon, to ſteele and ſtrengthen the ſoule againſt the on-ſet of contrary reaſons.

Cap. 29.

He is the ſalvation of my countenance: that is, He will ſo ſave as I ſhall ſee, and my enemies ſhall ſee it; and upon ſeeing, my *countenance* ſhall be cheared and lifted up; Gods ſaving kindneſſe ſhall be read in my countenance, ſo that all who looke on mee, ſhall ſay, God hath ſpoken peace to my ſoule, as well as brought peace to my condition.

That *God* is not only ſalvation, but ſalvations to his people. *Mille mali ſpecies, mille ſalutis erunt*

He ſaith not *ſalvation*, but *ſalvations:* becauſe as our life is ſubject to many miſeries, in *ſoule*, *body*, and *ſtate*, publique and private, &c. ſo God hath many *ſalvations:* If wee have a thouſand troubles, he hath a thouſand wayes of help; as hee hath more bleſſings than one, ſo hee hath more ſalvations than one. He ſaves our ſoules from ſin, our bodies from danger, and our eſtates from trouble. *Hee is the Redeemer of his people*; and not onely ſo, but with him is *plenteous redemption* of all perſons, of all parts both of body and ſoule, from all ill, both of ſinne and miſery, for all times, both now and hereafter. He is an everlaſting ſalvation.

Pſal. 130. 7

David doth not ſay, God will ſave me;

me; but God is ſalvation it ſelfe, and nothing but ſalvation. Our ſins onely ſtop the current of his mercy, but it being above all our ſins, will ſoon ſcatter that cloud, remove that ſtop, and then wee ſhall ſee and feele nothing but ſalvation from the Lord. *All his wayes are mercy and peace* to a repentant ſoule that caſts it ſelfe upon him. Cap. 29. Pſa 25.10.

Chriſt himſelfe is nothing elſe but ſalvation clothed in our fleſh. So olde *Simeon* conceived of him, when he had him in *his armes*, and was willing thereupon to yeeld up his ſpirit to God, having ſeen Chriſt the ſalvation of God: when we embrace Chriſt in the armes of our Faith, we embrace nothing but ſalvation. Hee makes up that ſweet name given him by his Father, and brought from heaven by an Angell to the full: a name in the Faith of which, it is impoſſible for any beleeving ſoule to ſinke. Luke 2 29 Luke 2. 14

The devill in trouble preſents God to us as a revenging *deſtroyer*, and unbeleefe preſents him under a falſe vizard; but the ſkill of *faith* is, to preſent

Cap. 29. Thinke of God as a Saviour in trouble.

him as a Saviour clothed with ſalvation. Wee ſhould not ſo much looke what deſtruction the devill and his threaten, as what ſalvation God promiſeth. To God belongs *the iſſues of death*, and of all other troubles which are leſſer deaths. Cannot hee that hath vouchſafed an iſſue in Chriſt from eternall death, vouchſafe an iſſue from all temporall evils? If hee will raiſe our bodies, can he not raiſe our conditions? Hee that brought us into trouble, can eaſily make a way out of it when hee pleaſeth. This ſhould bee a ground of reſolute and abſolute obedience, even in our greateſt extremities, conſidering God will either deliver us (from death, or by death, and) at length out of death.

Pſal. 68. 20.

Whither to flye in our troubles.

So then, when we are in any danger, wee ſee whither to goe for ſalvation, even to him that is nothing elſe but *ſalvation*; but then we muſt *truſt* in him (as *David* doth) and conceive of him as *ſalvation*, that wee may truſt in him. If we will not truſt in *ſalvation*, what will we truſt in? and if *ſalvation* it ſelfe cannot

not ſave us, what can? out of ſalvation there is nothing but deſtruction, which thoſe that ſeek it any where out of God, are ſure to meet with. How pittifull then is their caſe, who goe to a deſtroyer for ſalvation? that ſeek for help from hell? Cap. 29.

Here alſo we ſee to whom to return praiſe in all our deliverances, even to the God of our ſalvation. The *virgin Mary* was ſtirred up to magnifie the Lord, but why? *Her ſpirit rejoyced in God her Saviour.* Whoſoever is the inſtrument of any good, yet ſalvation is of the Lord; whatſoever brings it, hee ſends it. Hence in their holy feaſts for any deliverance, the cup they drank of, was called *the Cup of ſalvation:* and therefore *David* when he ſummons his thoughts, *what to render unto God?* hee reſolves upon this, to take *the Cup of ſalvation.* But alwayes remember this, that when we thinke of God as *ſalvation*, wee muſt thinke of him as hee is in Chriſt to his. For, ſo every thing in God is ſaving, even his moſt terrible attributes of *juſtice* and *power:* out of Chriſt,

Whom to returne Praiſe to in all our deliverances. Luke 1.

Pſ. 116. 13.

Cap. 29.

Christ, the sweetest things in God are terrible. Salvation it selfe will not save out of Christ; who is the onely *way* of salvation, called the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*.

Iohn 14.6

God first cheeres the heart, and then the outward man.

David addeth, (*Hee is the salvations of my countenance*) that is, hee will first speake salvation to my soule, and say, *I am thy salvation*; and when the heart is cheered (which is as it were *the Sun of this little world*) the beames of that joy will shine in the countenance. *True joy begins at the center, and so passeth to the circumference the outward man.* The countenance is as the glasse of the soul, wherein you may see the naked face of the soule, according as the severall affections thereof stand. In the countenance of an understanding creature, you may see more than a bare countenance. The spirit of one man may see the countenance of anothers inner man in his outward countenance: which hath a speech of its owne, and declares what the heart saith, and how it is affected.

Quest.

But how comes God to be the salvation of our countenance?

I

I answer: God onely graciously shines in the face of Jesus Christ, which we with the eye of faith beholding, receive those beames of his grace, and reflect them back againe. God shineth upon us first, and we shine in that *light of his countenance* upon us. *The joy* of salvation, (especially of spirituall and eternall salvation) is the onely true joy: all other salvations end at last in destruction, and are no further comfortable than they issue from Gods saving love. Cap. 29. *Answ.* Psal. 51. 12

God will have the body partake with the soule; as in matter of *griefe*, so in matter of *joy*, the lanthorn shines in the light of the Candle within. 1. Why God will have the salvation of his people appear openly.

Againe, *God brings forth the joy of the heart into the countenance, for the further spreading and multiplying of joy to others.* Next unto the sight of the sweet countenance of God, is the beholding of the cheerfull countenance of a Christian friend, rejoycing from true grounds. Whence it is that the joy of one becomes the joy of *many*, and the joyes of many meet in *one*; by which meanes, as many lights together make the greater light, 2.

Cap. 29. light, ſo many lightſome ſpirits make the greater light of ſpirit: and ſo God receiveth the more praiſe, which makes him ſo much to delight in the proſperity of his children. Hence it is, that in any deliverance of Gods people, *the*

Pſal. 142. 7 *righteous doe compaſſe them about*, to know *what God hath done for their ſoules*; and keep a ſpirituall Feaſt with them in partaking of their joy. And the godly have cauſe to joy in the deliverance of other Chriſtians, becauſe they ſuffered in their afflictions, and it may be in their ſinnes the cauſe of them, which made them ſomewhat aſhamed. Whence it is, that *Davids* great deſire

Pſal. 69. 6. was, that *thoſe who feared God might not be aſhamed becauſe of him*: inſinuating that thoſe who feare Gods Name, are aſhamed of the falls of Gods people. Now when God delivers them, this reproach is removed, and thoſe that had part in their ſorrow, have part in their joy.

3. Againe, God will have ſalvation ſo open, that it ſhall appeare in the countenance of his people, the more to daunt

daunt and vexe the enemies. *Cainiſh* hypocrites hang downe their heads, when God lifts up the countenance of their brethren; when the countenance of Gods children cleares up, then their enemies hearts and looks are cloudy. *Ieruſalems joy is Babylons ſorrow.* It is with the Church & her enemies as it is with a ballance, the ſcales whereof when one is up the other is downe. Whilſt Gods people are under a cloud, carnall people inſult over them, as if they were men deſerted of God. Whereupon they hang down their heads, & the rather, becauſe they think that by reaſon of their ſins, Chriſt and his Religion will ſuffer with them. Hence *Davids* care was, that the miſeries of Gods people *ſhould not be told in Gath.* The chief reaſon why the enemies of the Church gnaſh their teeth at the ſight of Gods gracious dealing, is, that they take the riſing of the Church, to be a preſage of their ruine. A leſſon which *Hamans* wife had learned. Cap. 29. 2 Sam. 1. 20 Eſth 6. 13.

This is a comfort to us in theſe times of *Iacobs* trouble and *Zions* ſorrow: The captivity

Cap. 29. captivity of the Church ſhall returne,
Pſa. 126. 1. *as rivers in the South.* Therefore the
Church may ſay, *Rejoyce not over me O*
Micah 7. 8. *my enemy, though I am fallen, I ſhall riſe*
againe. Though Chriſts Spouſe be now
as black as the Pots, yet ſhee ſhall bee
white as the Dove, If there were not
great dangers, where were the glory of
Gods great deliverance? The Church
Zach. 12. 2 at length will be as *a Cup of trembling,*
and as *a burthenſome ſtone.* The blood of
the Saints cry, their enemies violence
cryes, the prayers of the Church cry for
deliverance, and vengeance upon the
enemies of the Church: and (as that
Luke 18. 5 *importunate widow*) will at length pre-
vaile. Shall the importunity of one
poore woman prevaile with an *unright-*
teous Iudge? and ſhall not the prayers of
many that cry unto the righteous God
take effect? If there were Armies of
Prayers, as there are Armies of men,
wee ſhould ſee the ſtreame of things
turned another way. A few *Moſeſes* in
the Mount, would doe more good than
many ſouldiers in the valley. If wee
would lift up our *hearts* and *hands* to
God,

God, he would lift up our countenance. But alas, wee either pray not, or croſſe our owne prayers for want of love to the truth of God and his people. Cap. 29.

It is wee that keepe Antichriſt and his faction alive, to plague the unthankfull world. The ſtrength he hath is not from his owne cauſe, but from our want of zeale; we hinder thoſe *Halleluiahs* by private brabbles, coldneſſe and indifferency in Religion. The Church begins at this time a little to lift up her head again: Now is the time to follow God with prayers, that hee would perfect his owne worke, and plead his owne cauſe; that he would be revenged not onely of ours, but his enemies: that he would wholly free his Church from that miſerable bondage. Theſe beginnings give our faith ſome hold to be encouraged to goe to God, for the fulfilling of his gracious promiſe, that the Church may rejoyce in the *ſalvation of the Lord.* God doth but look for ſome to ſeek unto him: Chriſt doth but ſtay untill hee is awaked by our prayers. But it is to be feared, that God

Cap. 29. God hath not yet perfected his worke in *Zion*. The Church is not yet fully prepared for a full and glorious deliverance. If God had once his ends in the humiliation of the Church for sinnes past, with resolution of reformation for the time to come, then this age perhaps might *see the salvation of the Lord*, which the generations to come shall be witnesse of: *Wee* should see *Zion in her perfect beauty*. The generations of those that came out of *Egypt* saw and enjoyed the pleasant land which their progenitors were shut out of: who by reason of their murmuring, and looking backe to *Egypt*, and forgetfulnesse of the wonders which God had done for, and before them, perished in the wilderneſſe.

Vse. There is little cause therefore of envying the present flowrishing of the enemies of the Church, and of joyning and colluding with them; for it will prove the wisest resolution to resolve to fall and rise with the Church of Christ, considering the enemies themselves shall say, God hath done great things

things for them: Kings shall lay their Crowns at *Christs feet*, and *bring all their* glory to the *Church*. Cap. 29. Rev. 21. 24.

And for every Christian, this may be a comfort, that though their light for a time may be eclipsed, yet it shall break forth. *David* at this time was accounted an enemy of the State, and had a world of false imputations laid upon him, which hee was very sensible of; yet (wee see here) hee knew at length God would bee *the salvation of his countenance.*

But some (as Gideon*) may object, if God intend to be so gracious, why is it thus with us?* *Object.*

The answer is, *Salvation* is Gods *owne* work, *humbling* and casting downe is his *strange worke*, whereby he comes to his owne worke. For, when hee intends to save, hee will seeme to destroy first: and when hee will justifie, he will condemne first: whom he will revive, hee will kill first. Grace and goodnesse countenanced by God, have a native inbred Majesty in them, which maketh the face to shine, and borroweth not *Answ.*

Cap. 29. its luſtre from without, which God at length will have to appeare in its owne likeneſſe, howſoever malice may caſt a vaile thereon, and diſguiſe it for a time. And though wickedneſſe (as it is baſe borne, and a child of darkneſſe) may ſhelter it ſelfe under authority a while, yet it ſhall hide it ſelfe and runne into corners. The comfort of comforts is, that at that great day, (the day of all dayes) that day *of the Revelation of the righteous Iudgement of God*; the righteous ſhall then ſhine as the *Sunne* in the *firmament*, then Chriſt will come to be glorious in his Saints, and will be *the ſalvation of the countenance* of all his. Then all the works of darkneſſe ſhall be driven out of countenance, and adjudged to the place from whence they came. In the meane time let us (with *David*) ſupport our ſelves with the hopes of theſe times.

Dan. 12.

CAP.

Cap. 30.

Cap. XXX.

Of God, our God, and of particular application.

[My *God.*] These words imply a speciall interest that the holy man had in God, (*as his God*) being the ground of all which was said before; both of the duty of *trusting*, and of *praising*, and of the *salvation* that hee expected from God. He *is my God*, therefore be not disquieted but trust him. He *is my God*, therefore hee will give mee matter to praise him, and will be *the salvation of my countenance*; God hath some speciall ones in the world, to whom he doth as it were passe over himselfe, and whose God he is by vertue of a more speciall covenant; whence we have these excellent expressions, *I will be your God, and you shall be my people: I will be your Father, and you shall be my sonnes and daughters.* Since the *fall* wee having lost our communion with God the chiefe good, our happinesse stands in recovering againe

That *Davids* interest in *God* was a speciall foundation of his trusting in God.

Jer. 31. 33. 2 Cor. 6. 18

Cap. 30.

fellowſhip with him. For this end wee were created, and for this redeemed, and for effecting of this, the Word and Sacraments are ſanctified to us, yea, and for this end God himſelfe (out of the bowels of his compaſſion) vouchſafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, founded upon Jeſus Chriſt, and his ſatisfaction to divine juſtice; ſo that by Faith wee become one with him, and receive him, as offered of his Father to *be all in all to us.*

Why *Chriſt* hath his name *Immanuel.*

Hence it is, that CHRIST hath his name *Immanuell, God with us.* Not onely becauſe hee is *God*, and *man* too, (both natures meeting in one perſon) but becauſe being God in our nature, he hath undertooke this office to bring God and us together. The maine end of Chriſts comming and ſuffering, was to reconcile, and to gather together in one; and (as *Peter* expreſſeth it) *to bring man againe to God. Immanuel* is the bond of this happy agreement, and appeares for ever in heaven to make it good. As the comfort hereof is great, ſo the foundation of it is ſure and everlaſting. God will

1 Pet. 3. 18

will be our God, *so long* as he is Christs God; and *because* hee is Christs God. Thus the Father of the faithfull, and all other holy men before Christ, apprehended God to be their God in the *Messias* to come. Christ was the ground of their interest. Hee was *yesterday* to them as well as *to day* to us. Hence it is that God is called the *portion* of his people, and they his *jewels:* hee their onely *rock* and *strong Tower*, and they his peculiar ones.

Cap. 30. Ioh. 20 10.

Heb. 13. Psa. 73. 26. Mal 3 25. Psal 7..

Well may we wonder that the great God should stoope so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinfull dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of Angels, a torment of devils, and glory of our nature and persons; and will be matter of admiration, and praising God unto us for all eternity.

Vse.

As God offereth himselfe to be ours in Christ (else durst we lay no claime to him) so there must be in us an appropriating grace of *faith*, to lay hold of

There there must be on our part an appropriating of *God* as he tenders himselfe to be our God.